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# CATHOLIC MIND

*November-December, 1960*

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**Bishop John J. Wright**

*discusses*

- The Church in American Society
- Internationalism
- "Liberals" and "Conservatives"
- Secularism in America
- Christian Optimism
- Freedom and Authority

ARTICLES • PAPAL AND EPISCOPAL STATEMENTS • ADDRESSES



# CATHOLIC MIND

58th Year • An America Press Publication

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920 Broadway  
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One Year—\$3.00

Two Years—\$5.00

Foreign—\$3.50 Yearly

NOV.-DEC., 1960

VOL. LVIII, No. 1152

## ARTICLES AND ADDRESSES

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## IN THIS ISSUE

This issue of the CATHOLIC MIND is devoted to a selection of articles from the pen of one of the most articulate members of the American hierarchy—MOST REV. JOHN J. WRIGHT, Bishop of Pittsburgh. More than an outstanding religious leader, Bishop Wright is also a scholar of recognized merit.

The Bishop, for example, has long been interested in the problem of nationalism. His book, *National Patriotism in Papal Teaching*, first published in 1942, has gone through three printings. It has been hailed as "required reading for all students of government." Among the articles and addresses in the following pages, therefore, we single out for the special attention of our readers his EDUCATION FOR THE POSTWAR WORLD (p. 509), a doctrinal and historical treatment of the phenomenon of nationalism with particular reference to its postwar manifestations in this country. Citing its dangers, Bishop Wright proposes as the only remedy a truly Christian, and therefore internationalist, view of the world. For a still deeper probing of the theological foundations of internationalism, we recommend THE MASS AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER (p. 521).

Also worthy of special note is THE CHURCH AND AMERICAN SOCIETY (p. 484). In view of the current religio-political controversy between Catholics and certain of our Protestant brethren, Bishop Wright's reflections on Catholicism in America are most timely. Similarly, AUTHORITY AND FREEDOM (p. 499), an explanation of the Catholic view on these two apparently contradictory concepts, is a valuable contribution to this controversy.

In "LIBERALS," "CONSERVATIVES" AND THE COMMON GOOD (p. 549) Bishop Wright plunges deep into another controversy that is raging both within and without the Church today. What is "liberalism," anyway? What is "conservatism"? Is there a common ground on which "liberals" and "conservatives" can meet? Thoughtful reading of this article will do much to allay intemperate name-calling.

Other articles, dealing with such diverse topics as "privilege" and the "space age," manifest the range of Bishop Wright's interests.

*The Catholic contribution to the community is much more intimately identified with the American reality than we or our neighbors usually suppose. Our impact on our fellow citizens is considerably greater than seems to be understood.*

## The Church *and American Society\**

I INTEND no paradox but only to point out a curious fact when I say that Catholicism sometimes seems an unknown quantity in the American community. Despite the widespread and frequently violent criticisms of Catholicism; despite the considerable publicity which Catholicism and things Catholic receive in the press, movies and other media of popular information, Catholicism is in many ways the least well-known, perhaps, of the myriad religions whose names are familiar to Americans.

Dean Willard Sperry of the Harvard Divinity School demonstrated this strange truth some years ago when he wrote his book *Religion*

*in America* in response to an invitation from the Cambridge University Press in England to contribute to a series of studies designed to interpret certain institutions to the English public. Dean Sperry undertook to explain in a general way, all—and in a particular way, many—of the 256 religious groups in America, their nature and place in the community. He obviously felt prepared to comment knowledgeably on all the religious traditions in the American community, from Adventism to Zoroasterism—all, that is, save one. That one was not a recent importation from the Orient nor a passing fringe-form of any obscure cult in the hills of the South or the exotic

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\*One of a series of lectures (1953-54) on Catholicism and American Culture, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, N.Y.

towns of the West. The one exception was Catholicism.

Dean Sperry himself confessed with disarming humility his inability to interpret Catholicism in America to his English readers. He clearly appreciated how embarrassing this inability was, especially since, as he admitted, he lived surrounded by large numbers of Catholics and in a community where Catholic institutions are many, long-established and quite public. And yet he avowed that his intimate knowledge of their understanding of themselves by his Catholic neighbors was approximately that of "the average Protestant householder."

The knowledge of Catholicism possessed by such a person is thus described by Dean Sperry:

The average Protestant householder knows Catholicism only outwardly: by its substantial churches; by the crowds pouring from its doors at the end of a Mass; by the police directing traffic at such a time—an attention seldom given to a neighboring Protestant congregation and, if the truth be told, not always required by its smaller numbers; by the arrangements which must be made to allow maids to attend Mass; by early dinners in Lent or during a Novena preaching mission (by the way what is a Novena?); by vague rumors that the *Index Expurgatorius* is not unobserved on news stands or in bookstores; by disgruntled comments in conservative clubs at the growing strength of the Irish vote; by the loyal patronage which parish priests accord professional baseball games; by the intransigence of the Church in the matters of birth control and divorce, and its scepticism as to the "noble experiment" of prohibi-

tion. In all these respects we look at Catholicism with mixed emotions of envy and perplexity. Its customs are not ours, the two ways of life do not always "mesh" like well-oiled gears. There is, however, one thing we cannot do: we cannot ignore that which we do not wholly understand. The massive fact of American Catholicism is too considerable to be dismissed by studied indifference.

And so, in order to be fair and to complete his picture of religion in America, the dean adopted a clever but revealing device. He decided to let the mysterious Catholics speak for themselves. In the hope that their spokesman might be someone with a mentality and an idiom somehow approximating those of Protestant readers, he chose a convert to Catholicism, Mr. Theodore Maynard, to interpret us to him so that he in turn might present us to his English readers. He boiled down Maynard's *Story of American Catholicism* and was careful to attribute almost every proposition to Maynard, referring to him as "our chronicler." Writes Sperry: "I shall refer to the author as our 'chronicler,' and shall introduce my own comments by the gambit 'one' or 'we'. In this way I shall hope not to make the author himself chargeable for my Protestant second thoughts."

Thus by a combination of courtesy and caution Sperry became able to describe some 30 million of his American neighbors with something like accuracy and at least attempted understanding. Mormonism, Christian Science, Vedanta and Rosi-

crucianism would seemingly have presented no comparable difficulties!

It is this astonishing confession by an urbane and friendly critic which prompts my contention that, for all the publicity it receives, Catholicism is almost unknown in large areas of the American community. Perhaps even more distressing is the fact that the place of Catholicism in the American community is largely unknown to ourselves. I cannot myself forget how George Shuster's *Catholic Spirit in America* came to me as a revelation when first I read it and with what "wild surmise" I gazed on the Pacific which Shuster spreads before us in his story of the place of Catholicism in the early history of America's formation.

### A Rich Heritage

As a practical conclusion from this initial fact—the relatively unknown part of Catholicism in the national life—one is tempted to suggest a self-study project by us Catholic Americans in order that we may discover that our heritage in America is much richer than a mere matter of a few "firsts" among names and dates; our complex contribution to the community is much more intimately identified with the American reality than we or our neighbors usually suppose; and our impact on the minds and customs of our fellow citizens is considerably greater than seems to be understood.

It is becoming almost a stereotype to speak of "fear of Catholicism" and to take it for granted that Ca-

tholicism is disliked or held suspect by large numbers of our American neighbors. The response to Mr. Paul Blanshard's lectures and books gives ground for this feeling that Catholicism is an object of fear and dislike in large areas of the American community. So do some of the articles and editorials which appear regularly in typical non-Catholic religious periodicals, even literate ones like *The Christian Century*. So, finally and notably, does an anti-Catholic attack like the hurtful article which Joseph Harsch wrote recently in *The Christian Science Monitor* purporting to give reasons why Catholics are allegedly given special treatment in Washington investigations.

It is worth while to analyze the roots of these sentiments of fear and fury which cloud up discussions of Catholicism in the American community. Such analysis reveals that most of our difficulties stem from the exact same circumstances as do our advantages. I mean that the very factors which, from one point of view, make us so readily American apparently operate, from another point of view, to make many Americans nervous about us.

For example, the Catholic Church in America is probably still thought of as an "immigrant" church. To be sure, the other religious traditions in America are also importations from abroad except for a half-dozen denominations which have sprung from the native soil and which, oddly enough, are not usually thought of as being particularly

American. Everyone, I think, knows the sense in which Protestants, even when relatively close to their European origins, can be nativists, while Catholics, or at least Catholicism, are thought of as "immigrant." The distinction between nativist and immigrant is arbitrary, but it is clear and fairly widely accepted, even if sometimes ridiculous.

I might cite a personal example. My mother was born in Boston. So were her parents before her. Yet a Swedish lady who lived near us when I was a boy and who came to this country when she was already married, used to speak of my mother, with great affection but heavy accent, as "the little Irish lady with six children."

This alien air which has surrounded Catholicism in so many American neighborhoods has resulted in many short-range disadvantages, but it is a long-range source of strength to the Church in a nation which is, in its roots and idealism, itself "immigrant." The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in America illustrates, at least in its ancestral origins, how similar to the American civil pattern is the make-up of the Catholic spiritual community in this country. Catholicism in America has been served by bishops who by origin or descent were the sons of just about every national group otherwise represented in the national life: Austrian, Belgian, Canadian, Cuban, French, English, Dutch, German, Hungarian, Luxemburger, Irish, Italian, Mexican, Polish, Scotch, Spanish, Swiss and

Eastern European. One blended Negro and white blood in his veins. To the extent that America herself has been made strong by a plurality of racial strains, so the Church in America has certainly shared something of that strength and of the genius of America by reason of her parallel diversity. One feels that this may prove of great significance in the future both to the Church and to America should any effort be made to splinter the unity of the American community.

### A "Proletarian" Church

Perhaps related to this first point is a second of even greater significance. There is a sense in which the Catholic Church in America has been from the beginning and is still "proletarian." Rural America has been and remains largely Protestant, with exceptions which prove rather than violate the rule. To the extent that this is true, any "peasantry" which we have in America is Protestant rather than Catholic. Catholicism has been largely identified with the working classes and the cities, though not all the cities, of course. Perhaps the word "proletarian" is not a good word to use in this context; all I mean is that Catholicism is in our country a religion with deep roots and powerful support among the so-called working classes.

This is also illustrated in the leadership of the Church. One should not exaggerate the significance of this fact, but it remains interesting nonetheless that, as Archbishop

Cushing pointed out in a talk to a C.I.O. convention, the "democratic," not to say proletarian, roots of our bishops are dramatically revealed in the family backgrounds whence they come. Of all the bishops, archbishops and Cardinals in the history of the Church in America and down to this day, not one is the son of a college graduate. Not one comes from what most people would consider a "privileged class."

Our bishops and our clergy fairly generally are the sons of farmers, mill-workers, coal-miners, dockhands, day-laborers, tradesmen, shopkeepers and other types of working men. It would seem then that if this is the century of the "common man" in any Christian and democratic sense, the Catholic Church, both through its spiritual chieftains and through the broad masses of its devout working people, holds a unique place in the American community and has a powerful contribution to make to the spiritual direction of a community so largely industrial in its character.

There may easily be a reflection of the truth behind these same facts in the interesting coincidence that the most recent Democratic administration and the present Republican administration have both found it somehow appropriate to name Catholics to the post of Secretary of Labor in cabinets where Catholics are otherwise too often absent.

A corollary of this "proletarian" character of the Catholic body in the American community is that our people are, as we have noted, chief-

ly urban in their background and interest. This fact, too, may account for some of the prejudices against us.

Catholicism is largely urban, but America is not. Rural America's suspicion of the "city slicker" is a favorite subject of caricature and comedy, but it corresponds with something quite real in rural American character. Anyone who watched the telecast of the investigations in which Senator Tobey of New Hampshire pursued with righteous wrath the people involved in "big city" political scandals must have noted the utter inability of Senator Tobey to comprehend how God could permit situations to develop in a city of five million which do not occur in a New Hampshire town of 500—or do they?

In any case, the hearings revealed a tension between rural and urban America, as did the alignments on similar hearings at about the same time. To what extent this antagonism carries over, however falsely or inappropriately, to the relations between Catholicism and rural American Protestantism, it is difficult to estimate. It is a point worth thinking on, however, in this matter of anti-Catholic fears.

### Typically American

On the other hand, Catholicism has obviously itself felt very much at home in the American community. It has not merely come to terms with the basic postulates of that community but has even been accused of undue attachment, or at

least uncritical devotion, to some of their practical corollaries and by-products. On this point Dean Sperry writes with critical sympathy. He says that no church is more vocal in unqualified affirmation of its 100-per-cent patriotism than the Catholic and he makes it quite clear that these protestations are completely sincere and justified by events. However, he observes that in matters of national policy the Catholic citizens sometimes seem to many Protestants too uncritically patriotic. He considers that our "instant loyalty" to the Federal government is in part a vote of thanks for the opportunities which the country has given the Catholic Church and he quotes utterances of our clergy which say as much. "What one misses, perhaps, in these utterances," the dean observes, "is a strain of sober, critical second thought upon all of our American institutions."

Catholicism has played one part in the American community which distinguishes it from all other religious traditions, and which has also given it an authentically American characteristic. It has perpetuated many of the national cultures of the Old World while reconciling them with one another in the pattern of the New World. It has done this work of reconciliation without elimination of whatever is valid and of value. If it be true, as is sometimes said, that Catholicism in America has produced relatively little by way of a native Catholic culture in the United States, it is also true that precious cultural heritages

have been preserved here by Catholic peoples, to their own spiritual good and to the enrichment of the American community. Not long ago a non-Catholic doctor who grew up in a Maine town remarked that the Catholic priest of his native town was the only intellectual companion with whom his father felt at home. He remembered the priest as the representative not only of Catholicism in his community but also of a rich cultural heritage to which his own travels had introduced him.

Nor has this Catholic influence of a broadly cultural kind been limited to the influence of a few gifted individuals. Catholic people as a group have exercised a more refining and spiritualizing influence on the general traditions of the community than they themselves may realize. The American observance of Christmas and of other sacred seasons is a case in point. Theodore Maynard reminds us in his book *The Catholic Church and the American Idea* that the observance of Christmas was proscribed in Boston, for example, as late as 1856 precisely because it was looked upon as a Catholic aberration. Christmas Day was made a work day; even in 1870 any pupil who stayed home from school on Christmas Day was severely punished or even expelled. The family of Emily Dickinson was suspected of being secretly Catholic because they observed Christmas in Amherst. We owe it to the influence of the Irish with their Christmas candles, the French with their family and parish observances, the Ger-

mans with their Advent wreaths and Christmas trees, that these prejudices were eventually eliminated and that the Catholic observance of Christmas became so typically "American."

We fortunately need not assume responsibility for some of the more recent developments in the American observance of Christmas and Easter, but the manner in which these festive seasons loom so large in the American imagination we owe in very great part to the original Catholic influence.

It is only fair to note that occasionally persons outside the household of the Faith regret that our influence along spiritual lines is not even greater. Here again Dean Sperry proves a friendly critic when he writes that many miss in American Catholicism any wide concern for the contemplative life. We Americans are too practical, he asserts, too much given to action without reflection. He contends that Catholicism might have been expected to correct our culture at this point. He quotes Archbishop Ireland as evidence that we have not been disposed to provide such a mystical corrective: "An honest ballot and social decorum will do more for God's glory and the salvation of souls than midnight flagellations or Compostellian pilgrimages."

It is only fair to recall the context in which John Ireland was speaking and the immediate problems to which he was addressing himself. It is reassuring, moreover, to detect in the catalogues of Catholic

publishing houses a very remarkable increase in strictly spiritual literature, most of it derivative from the Catholic traditions of other countries, but not a little revealing the native genius of our own land. It is noteworthy, too, that the Catholic lay retreat movement is continually extending its numbers and its influence, and that "days of recollection" are conspicuous in the calendar of present-day Catholic institutions, clubs and parishes.

Catholic scholarship in the American community is a subject of frequent analysis and debate. So many recent studies have appeared on this point that there is probably no need to discuss it here. One may be permitted the expression of an apparently well-founded hope that we are beginning to come into our own, little by little, in the world of scholarship despite the very real disadvantages of a financial kind under which most of our educational institutions do their work.

It must be confessed that, except for a few familiar names, the authors who have best told certain chapters of our cultural history in America have been friendly neighbors rather than our own writers. One thinks of Francis Parkman, Willa Cather, even Longfellow on occasion.

### The Church Under Attack

At the moment it is difficult to deny that our place in the American community is under attack. The numbers of those who join in the attack and the permanent signifi-



cance of what they have to say are open to question. The *fact* of the attack and the lines it follows are clear; the latter are new in their direction.

A century ago the attack on the Catholic Church in America was essentially pornographic. Today the attack is largely political or at least pseudo-political. There is a professed misgiving in some circles as to what use we would make of political power if we became a majority in this country and there are even charges that our professions of fidelity to the Constitution and to American political idealism involve an "interim ethic" which we might put aside upon our accession to power.

It is exceedingly difficult, sometimes even exasperating, to be perpetually issuing reassurances that we are sincere sharers of the constitutional and other political traditions which we consider ourselves to have helped establish, indeed to have inspired in no small degree. It is apparently idle to plead the evidences of our support of America and her institutions by the same means which others employ in the support of these. It is beneath our own dignity to argue, as so often we do, from the statistics of our representatives in the Armed Services and in other trustworthy posts. These considerations are received with cynicism by any who need such arguments.

On the other hand, there are undoubtedly many things we can do to persuade others (and perhaps

ourselves) of our major and beneficent place in the American community. For one thing, it is well that we keep clear the rather obvious fact that we are here in America to stay. This basic premise is by no means as well understood as it should be; the points we have considered concerning the "immigrant" air attributed to the Church would indicate as much. Theodore Maynard's opening chapter in *The Catholic Church and the American Idea* has much that is helpful on this point.

Then, too, we would do well to extend the influence of our good works, our corporal and spiritual works of mercy, in the widest possible measure. It is very difficult for essentially good people to resist the logic of goodness in others. The work of our sisters frequently dispels more prejudices than could be handled by more hours of speeches than we should care to give or hear. A recent book by the Jewish father of a cerebral palsy child quotes the illuminating remark made by a non-Catholic doctor when he was obliged to break the news of the child's unfortunate condition. "Try to place the little boy with Catholic sisters," the doctor said, adding that thus the parents would be doing all that their hearts could desire to protect the little boy. It is an eloquent testimony to one side of Catholicism which has favorably and powerfully impressed most members of the American community from the beginning.

Finally, we can perhaps be a lit-

the more conscious of the need that we develop certain potentialities of Catholicism in this country which, rightly or wrongly, many people think have been neglected. Our organized activities and impressive organizations will lose nothing from more frequent emphasis on the organic nature of the Church. Perhaps the flowering of the Trappist and other contemplative communities in our midst, together with the new interest in spiritual literature, closed retreats and vigils before the Sacrament, will both increase and emphasize those mystical resources of our people which they themselves may occasionally under-emphasize and their critics so frequently forget. In this connection the liturgical movement makes a special and providential contribution.

We would do well to pray that God will prosper the intellectual apostolate among us. The difficulties of the intellectual vocation in the service of the Church are many

and familiar; good works sometimes seem so much more easy than the long, hard road of study, consecrated learning and dedicated defense, by written and spoken word, of the truth taught us by the Divine Intellectual, the Incarnate Word of God.

Moreover, the intellectual vocation is a lonely one and in danger of becoming detached from the practical concerns of the American community unless there develops a broad popular appreciation of what the Church thinks on the questions which agitate that community. Programs like that which New Rochelle has sponsored in observance of its jubilee help create just such a popular atmosphere of understanding and reflection. That is why you yourselves, by this very series which you have sponsored, exemplify the constructive place of Catholicism in the American community and the manner in which that place is steadily improved.

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*The men who most contributed to the early building of our nation feared God with a holy and wholesome fear. They would have found unintelligible the suggestion that there is no connection between the law of God and the law of the land.*

## Secularism in America\*

THE SOLEMN gathering for the Red Mass, offered for the members of the bench and the bar, permits me to serve as spokesman for those who bear witness to the law of God in speaking to those who are privileged to write, interpret or apply the law of the land.

There was a time in our country when any dichotomy between the law of God and the law of the land was rarely real and never intentional. It was assuredly never as systematic as developments under the influence of aggressive secularism have sometimes made it seem.

Quite the contrary, those who bore witness to the law of God were wont to preach and to pray

for enthusiastic, wholehearted obedience to the law of the land, because in so doing they were logically and loyally defending the civil corollaries of their sacred teachings.

At the same time, those whose public duties bound them to the enactment, interpretation and enforcement of the law consciously sought to promote piety and virtue, not merely to define the limits of the law's negative interest in these, and did so, convinced that thus they best served the civic common good and the rights and needs of human personality adequately considered.

Our forefathers, for reasons of prudent realism, provided in their

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\*A sermon delivered at the Red Mass celebrated in conjunction with the 1959 convention of the American Bar Association, Miami, Fla.

constitutions for the separation of the organized Church and the organized State; but their idealism, even in temporal matters, was informed and inspired by the Judeo-Christian tradition, and especially by the influence of Revelation as transmitted by the Church; and so there is reflected in the basic laws which they wrote a blend of divine faith and human wisdom, a happy medley of the hopes of earth and the will of Heaven.

The United States Supreme Court, speaking by Mr. Justice Brewer, on one occasion declared in remarkably direct terms the religious, indeed, the organized Christian character of the American tradition within which the law of the land became an effort by positive human legislation to apply the broad precepts of the law of conscience and the law of God, unto the service of virtue and the perfection of personality.

The Court said:

If we pass beyond these matters to a view of American life as expressed by its laws, its business, its customs, and its society, we find everywhere a clear recognition of the same truth. Among other matters note the following: The form of oath universally prevailing, concluding with an appeal to the Almighty; the custom of opening sessions of all deliberative bodies with prayer; the prefatory words of all wills, "in the name of God, Amen"; the laws respecting the observance of the Sabbath, with a general cessation of secular business, and the closing of courts, legislatures, and other similar public assemblies on that day; the churches

and church organizations which abound in every city, town and hamlet; the multitude of charitable organizations existing everywhere under Christian auspices . . . these and many other matters which might be noticed add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of formal utterances that this is a Christian Nation.

So far the words of the Court: nor is their import obscure. Without prejudice to the strict religious tolerance that obtains for all faiths, without disparagement of the notable influence on our national life of the devout members of other faiths, this nation was considered in its inspiration and its life a Christian nation.

The traditional habits of mind and attitudes of our people, as well as their institutions and laws, were those which have been developed under the dominance of the Christian faith, embryonic in the promises made to Israel, born together with the Church on Pentecost 2,000 years ago, and coming to maturity with a strength so vital that it communicated itself to the cultures of those peoples who once made Europe great and America possible.

The men who most contributed to the early building of our nation feared God. They did so with a holy and a wholesome fear, and because they did, they wrote into the preamble of the constitution of my own native state, typical of that of many, devout words of homage to their Creator, with a recognition of their dependence on Him and an explicit prayer for His direction in

the mighty task of building their Commonwealth.

They feared God, and so they did not talk glibly of a mere freedom to worship God, a freedom which they had scant intention of exercising or implementing. Rather, they wrote in the second article of their constitution words of right, but also of duty. They said: "It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society publicly and at stated seasons to worship the Supreme Being, the great Creator and Preserver of the universe..."

Such men feared God! They would have found unintelligible the suggestion that there is and need be no connection between the law of God and the law of the land, between personal morality and civic public virtue.

### Morality and Legality

Every American who walks in their tradition and who is in his right mind acknowledges that morality and legality, like Church and State, have separate areas of competence, separate formalities and separate sanctions; but the legislators, justices and lawyers who fashioned our basic legal traditions would have been appalled by the contention, now so often, so glibly, and so effectively advanced, that such separation means divorce of the law of the land from the law of God, and "that religious morality and civic virtue spring from totally distinct and completely separate, if not mutually antagonistic, sources."

Nothing could be further from

the mind of the men who wrote the basic laws of our States, the Founding Fathers who placed the Bible, God's law, on the very rostra where they took their oath to defend the law of the land. They would have had no trouble defining as blasphemous or vicious any efforts to represent them as being indifferent to the relation of civil obligation to moral duty, the law of the land to the rule of reason and the rule of reason to the law of God.

They would have resented as fraudulent the current kind of censorship by exclusion, "thought-control" by silent, careful editing, reflected in a paperback edition which purports to offer collegians and others the basic thought of Thomas Jefferson and yet edits out all the characteristic references to God, to virtue, to morality and to the blessings of religion which the author of the Declaration of Independence made so frequently.

Fortunately the bench and bar are not yet without men who dare—and the word "dare" is needed—to speak in the spirit and accent of the founders and fashioners of our legal heritage, as did that Protestant judge on the West Coast who recently braved the wrath of the new secularists, and incurred it, by suggesting from the bench that a Catholic boy would improve his regard for the law of the land by increasing his respect for the law of God and his consequent attendance at Sunday Mass.

The Catholic bishops of America have drawn the fire of the insurgent

secularists, and some of their own, because of their defense of the traditional American concept of the sovereignty of God over Church and States alike, the concept of the necessary relation between all ultimately valid laws and the postulates of the law of God.

### Spirit of Secularism

Sometimes criticism of the Catholic bishops for their opposition to the spirit of secularism has come from surprising, even disappointing, quarters. But equally often, there is consoling evidence that in the appeal for the spiritual philosophy of the Founding Fathers, Protestants and Catholics can and do speak as one. Nor are they alone.

For example, when the Catholic hierarchy issued its collective pastoral on the damage of secularism in the national life, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, an executive of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, made it clear that his co-religionists, whatever their positions on other and secondary matters, would stand together with us in what he called the "common fight against the inroads of humanistic secularism and the attacks of atheistic communism" which would "undermine the spiritual foundations upon which our freedoms, civilization and our culture necessarily rest."

Those foundations have always included the recognition that there are not two standards of morality. There is only one. It is God's standard. That standard is the norm of

rectitude, righteousness and justice. That single standard covers all man's relations to God, to himself and to the world about him.

It applies to every conceivable situation in life—in the home, in business, in the school, in the political field or in the field of entertainment. The thoughts of men are many; the will of God is one—and so by its very nature, God's standard precludes that duplicity which not only tempts man to live his life on two levels, one of morality, the other of legality, while beguiling him into thinking that this can be done without any compromise of moral principles.

Such a two-faced way of living explains the scandalous anomaly evident at times in our national life of paying lip service to God while failing to honor His claims in daily life. Of such a way of life, the god is neither Jehovah nor Jesus Christ; it is Janus—and we do well to pray earnestly and resolve mightily that we will always be at one in repudiating the two-faced god of the pagans.

That God's standard has disappeared more and more from our national life is due, as the Catholic bishops and the Presbyterian moderator both bear witness, to that totalitarian secularism and practical atheism which rule out all idea of the sovereignty of God.

Against such lamentable pretensions we must bear, in season and out, uncompromising witness to God's dominion over all the work of His hands, ourselves and our

societies included. We must be vigilant and prompt to affirm the sovereignty of God and His place in human affairs wherever opportunity presents. Where there is talk of the service we owe anything less than God, we must recall the principle by which St. Joan resolved every question pertaining to rival loves and loyalties: The Lord God must be first served.

The undermining of the standard of God's law in temporal affairs has been further hastened by the denial or neglect of the primacy of the spiritual, with a consequent debasing of human personality and degrading of human society. Ours is in large part a technical civilization, a "know-how" rather than a "know-why" civilization, and therefore one in which material and mechanical values inevitably tend to dominate thought and action. Excessive emphasis on "know-how" to the exclusion of speculation on "know-why" has produced the cult of the body, the predominance of the material, the worship of the gadget, an indifference to the spiritual and a repudiation of the moral.

We may note this in professional discussions, especially those pertaining to sociology, medicine and politics. Take, for example, the question of social disease which touches on all three. It offers an obvious example of how medical treatment on the material level alone, scientific techniques of "know-how" without reference to moral considerations of "know-why," are woefully inadequate as means to the protec-

tion or the perfection of persons.

Obviously in the case of the treatment of social disease, the problem is never purely scientific—and neither can the solution be. These actions and the offenses involved are never merely legal questions; they always include moral elements that are at the heart of the matter.

And yet, in *Social Medicine*, a publication of the New York Academy of Medicine, I read this significant paragraph typical of the neo-secularist approach:

Not long ago health administrators thought that if only some excellent curative agent were available to treat venereal disease cases, the problem could be solved fairly promptly. Now penicillin is providing more satisfactory treatment than the most sanguine might have dared hope, and yet we find that instead of diminishing, the venereal disease rate is rising. Recently the venereal disease director of one of our best state health departments said that he is convinced that the problem is much broader than that of treatment alone.

There must be a concerted assault on all aspects of the situation if effective control is to be secured. Treatment must be pushed as completely and carefully as possible. There must also be an attack by all community agencies which can help to remove conditions leading to promiscuity. Sex education must be improved and decent recreational opportunities made available. Home ties will have to be strengthened, prostitution repressed and intensive efforts made to rehabilitate socially those now engaged in prostitution and perversion.

Now what all of us, you and I, should find discouraging, what, as a

matter of candid fact, we should find downright dishonest in this paragraph, as in the whole report, is the studious avoidance of the use of the word "moral." There is talk of "family relations," "prostitution," numerous other notions all involving morality, moral codes, moral judgment, moral relations, moral questions—but a careful and surely not accidental omission of the word "moral." The omission is significant and I am afraid it is symptomatic. It is also fatal; fatal not merely to morality, but in final terms, to the work, prestige and interest of medicine, sociology and law.

It exemplifies that repudiation of the primacy of the spiritual which is the unhappy by-product of a "know-how" without "know-why" civilization, and of the effort to divorce the laws and procedures of the land from the law and the Providence of God.

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It should be our common concern to give the lie to any such pretense of the independence of valid legal philosophy from moral philosophy, and divorce of valid human law from the ultimate law of God. For all human laws, whether ecclesiastical or civil, have their source in God's law; otherwise they are meaningless. All human sanctions ultimately depend for their force and their meaning on the sanction of the conscience that is sensitive to the law of God.

The appeal to that conscience must be made by both the teachers of the law of God and the practitioners of the law of the land, or all law is in peril. So intimately bound up with one another are the laws of the land and the law of God, that he who mocks the one, undermines the other, while he who serves either becomes the noble servant of both.



*Liberty can only be secured by laws. Laws can only exist among beings endowed with liberty. Where there are no laws or too few, not liberty but slavery exists.*

## Authority and Freedom\*

THE MERE mention of the words "freedom" and "authority" suggests to the modern mind necessary opposition and inevitable contradiction. It is difficult for our generation to use the conjunctive "and" to state the relation of authority with freedom; we tend to relate the two concepts with the disjunctive "or," as if to imply that one must always choose between the two, freedom or authority.

For most, certainly today, the choice will instinctively be on the side of freedom. Almost anything can be sold us in the name of liberty; almost nothing is less attractive to us than obedience. Devastating wars, moral, intellectual and political disasters which could probably not be made acceptable in any other guise, are launched, not in-

frequently, on the basis that, whatever evil they may do, they will increase our liberty or at least constitute an affirmation of it in the face of real or alleged despotism. It is difficult to imagine a war being waged, with any measure of popular enthusiasm, in defense of authority; indeed, we have made the word "authoritarian" one of the least popular words in contemporary vocabulary, equating it with despotism, tyranny and like phrases which alarm and arouse the love for freedom.

Obedience is, to say the least, an unheralded virtue; against the grain in its demands, its objective worth is neglected if not questioned. In the political order only the most romantic and capricious forms of fascism seek or pretend to exalt as a

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\*The 1958 McAuley Lecture, St. Joseph's College, West Hartford, Conn.

dynamic virtue the concept of obedience; all other political systems, even those which are totalitarian in fact and truly despotic in every sense, offer themselves as means to increased freedom, greater emancipation and ever expanding liberty. There is grudging acknowledgment that some measure of authority is needed for good order and that some agreed obedience is required to preserve the common good; but the predilections of our generation are invariably for freedom, and the prejudices are strongly against authority.

### The Realm of Religion

In the realm of religion a like mood may be discerned. Traditionally, whatever the procedures inconsistent with civil or religious liberties for others which its political patrons have sometimes practiced or its religious prophets have occasionally preached, Protestantism has offered itself as a religion of liberty. Its emphasis on freedom and its de-emphasis of authority have significantly been regarded as sources of strength to Protestantism in a generation enamored of liberty. Catholicism, on the contrary, has been represented as a religion of authority and, whatever the paradox by which Catholic peoples so often turn up in the ranks of political revolutionaries and social progressives, the fact is that Catholicism does emphasize religious authority and place high value on the virtue of spiritual obedience.

True, Catholicism is never so pre-

occupied with authority that it forgets the rights of liberty, above all the God-given claims of individual conscience and human personality to freedom. The Catholic passion for freedom does not merely express itself through the voice of Catholic patriots or revolutionaries seeking political freedom for self or nation; it also speaks through Catholic moral philosophers and theologians, as well as through the authentic teachers in the Church, when these expound the classic Catholic concepts of free will, personal dignity and the rights, together with the dictates, of individual conscience. I might mention as recent typical examples the luminous pastorals of recent Archbishops of Paris, notably Cardinal Verdier, Cardinal Suhard and, in Lent of last year, Cardinal Feltrin, whose Lenten pastoral was on the very theme we are considering tonight. I might also recall the many and trenchant pronouncements of Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII on democracy, personal liberty, the rights of conscience and the essential functions of freedom in human perfection.

Similarly, Protestantism is not so committed to the concept of liberty but what it is well aware of the need for authority even in religious matters. No Pope or Church council could possibly make demands on obedient belief more unqualified than those made on the members of certain Protestant denominations by the authority of the Bible. The authoritarian spirit of the funda-

mentalist sects, in moral matters and dogmatic alike, is familiar enough. But even the more liberal schools of Protestantism bear honest witness that liberty is not license and that all human freedom is rigorously circumscribed.

A thoughtful Protestant clergyman in my own city, for example, a man who, I am certain, would wish to be thought of as "liberal" in the fullest sense, recently gave a sermon on freedom in which he warned his people against confusing liberty with absolute freedom. He said: "Absolute freedom is a horrible thing! To people who would apply Patrick Henry's words 'Give me liberty, or give me death' in every direction, I would reply, 'Yes, and so often you get both.'"

Nonetheless, more and more the effort is being made to suggest that the Catholic concepts of authority and freedom reflect precisely the difference between us and our Protestant neighbors. The suggestion is made that the radical difference between Catholicism and Protestantism is somehow bound up with a Catholic predilection for authority and a Protestant commitment to liberty, and that these are somehow mutually exclusive, indeed antagonistic.

Recent polemic in defense of Protestantism is based on this alleged contrast. It usually takes its vocabulary from the political conflicts of the hour and can be reduced to this summary of Bishop Oxnham's attack on Catholicism at Trinity Church in Boston some years

ago. The contention is this: Protestantism is dynamic, Catholicism is static; Protestantism is democratic and consistent with liberty, Catholicism is hierarchical and authoritarian. Accordingly, the mood of the hour being progressive and democratic, Catholicism is uncongenial to the modern mind. Protestantism begets democracy and grows strong in its political climate. Protestants because of their theology find democracy congenial; Catholics, on the other hand, prove incapable of political democracy because of their theological faith.

We are told, then, that our theological faith is inconsistent with the spirit of liberty; Protestant theology, on the other hand, breathes that spirit. Bishop Oxnham offers in typical speeches certain considerations which, he asserts, demonstrate the "congenial" atmosphere which Protestant theology creates for democratic freedom, and in a series of sometimes subtle but more often snide passages he attempts to establish a like "congenial" relationship between the spirit of Catholicism and that of political "authoritarianism" or even fascism.

The particular instances which the Methodist bishop accumulates in his effort to bolster his case against Catholicism as a religion "congenial" to democracy are contemporary and "political," but the fundamental charge is not new. The Methodist bishop sings an old song to a new tune: it is no small part of the classical Protestant case against Catholicism. Sabatier com-

presses it into the title of the book in which he gave it much more scholarly and sensitive expression than the controversial Methodist bishop could possibly have done. Bishop Oxnham popularizes the alleged problem by implying that the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism is a conflict between "religious democracy" and "religious fascism." This is simply a politically minded polemicist's way of saying what has frequently been said by the heretic, i.e., that the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism is a conflict between the religion of "liberty" and the religion of "authority." It is the religious form of the supposed antagonism between authority and liberty.

#### The "Liberal" Protestant

Freedom, it has often been argued, is the refreshing note of primitive Christianity. The early Church was characterized by an untrammelled spirit of liberty, liberty in discipline and liberty in doctrine. In this, it is said, the Church reflected the mind and purpose of its Founder.

The "liberal" Protestant argues this way: Jesus Christ came into the world to restore the spirit of liberty; He came to free men from all bondage, from the bondage of sin, of course, but also from the bondage of the Old Law. Indeed, the most obvious difference between the New Law, which Christ established, and the Old Law, which He annulled, is the absence in the one of that legalism and ecclesiasticism which had

reduced the other to spiritual servility. Christ protested against the intolerable manner in which the religious life of the people had been hampered by pyramiding hierarchies, minute legislation and the petty sanctions of organized religious authority.

As against this, it is claimed, Christ preached no binding dogmas, no prescribed ritual and no authoritative hierarchy. He preached only the spirit of liberty. His dogmas, if indeed we can call them such, were few and very simple; He taught the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man and salvation through the acceptance of His teachings. He expressly forbade the recognition of any religious authority lesser than that of God Himself: call no man Father, for one is your Father, God. Christ may have provided for a few simple rites, probably baptism and possibly the Eucharist in some form; the whole point of His teaching, both in faith and in morals, is that it is free. It can perhaps best be described in terms of contrast with authoritarianism. Thus the "liberal" Protestant represents primitive Christianity to have been.

The "liberal" Protestant then concludes that this spirit of liberty and the essential Christianity which it informs are to be found nowadays only in Protestantism. The Protestant, he reminds us, is perfectly free in the realm of dogma. He may choose, accept, reject or make his own those doctrines which his private interpretation, his emancipated intellect, his religious experience or

his theological sense dictate. In matters of morals and of religious discipline he is largely free to choose for himself in accordance with the demands of his spiritual development or the voice of his autonomous conscience. Private interpretation is not limited by the modern Protestant to dogma, the Apostle's Creed and the pages of the Bible. It extends to moral matters, to the Ten Commandments and even, as in the cases of race suicide, abortion and divorce, to the natural law itself.

In matters of worship, the Protestant is particularly free. He may attend any church he prefers, unless he happens to be a somewhat "snooty" high Anglican or an unduly cantankerous Evangelical. He may eat or not eat fish or flesh; Friday for his wife presents no vexing problems of a rubrical kind. He may order his day, Sunday included, much as he pleases and his calendar is not complicated by feasts of precept or fasts of imposed penance. He considers that he lives and moves and has his being in the very spirit of primitive Christianity. He tells us that he has the truth and the truth has made him free!

Not so with the benighted Catholic! Bishop Oxnham, with merciful restraint, does no more than suggest our pathetic plight. It needs no great development; the Protestant observes it with pity, you Catholics know it all too well. In liturgical discipline you are hemmed in on every side; your diet, the disposition of your days, your Sunday

goings in and goings out, your access to the sacramental system, your rubrical risings and sittings and genuflections, your Signs of the Cross, your takings of Holy Water, all these seem to the Protestant to be rigidly appointed for you. You must worship in this church and not another; when you are baptized it must be in this fashion and not in another, and only sponsors of these qualifications may stand for you.

If you be married, it must be in this season and not in that, in this church and not in that, and all manner of questions, regulations and conditions must be bravely met before you are finally privileged to hear the strains of the wedding march. Alas, if your parish priest be too scrupulous a disciple of St. Pius X, even the Wedding March, if you prefer that from *Lohengrin*, will probably be denied you. Once married, even the most intimate aspects of your wedded life are regulated by moral laws which many Protestants now reject; your children must be educated under this code, sedulously protected from that other. When finally you come to die, you may not be buried on certain days and you must be buried in certain places. A whole web of canonical disciplines imprisons you at every turn.

### Matters of Faith

In matters of faith your lot is no less tragic. In the opinion of men like Bishop Oxnham, the simple teachings of Jesus have been enor-

mously complicated for you by a vast theological system, a system contrived largely by professional theologians or ecclesiastical councils. Not only that, but the immense doctrinal super-structure, elaborate, intricate and enormously technical, is imposed upon you in its every detail as binding at the peril of your soul. According to him, you are allowed little or no room for speculation, scant opportunity for choice, only one alternative: believe or be anathema. You cannot reach your own conclusions with regard to the number of the sacraments in the primitive Church; you cannot allow your personal mystical sense to decide for you what attitudes you are to take toward the Mother of Christ, the fact of the Incarnation or the manner of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. This sobering conclusion appears to impose itself: in the spirit of its teaching and the manner of its discipline the Catholic Church (and at this point it is fashionable studiously to say "the Roman Catholic Church") has gone back to the spiritual tyranny of the Old Law, the very spirit against which Christ so vehemently protested.

The "liberal" Protestant appears quite honestly to believe that the Catholic, unlike his Protestant neighbor who lives and believes in the spirit of liberty, is almost as badly off as was ever the son of Israel in the days of the Pharisees, the phylacteries and the burdensome minutiae of the law or the bondage of priestly castes. He binds his own

limbs, as the old phrase says, by his act of faith and he puts the other end of the chain into the hands of the priest. Such is the situation as between the free spirit of Protestant "democracy" in religion and the dogmatic authoritarianism of Catholic theology. So, the "liberal" Protestant decides, Catholics live in a theological atmosphere necessarily "uncongenial" to political democracy.

Much of this calls for no refutation before a Catholic audience; some of it is plainly irrelevant. A bit of it, one sometimes fears, is conscious malice. It is not easy to see what political democracy has to do with the acceptance or rejection of a Revelation which is presumed to come from God. It is hard to see why one could not debate which of several candidates for public office are the most competent and choose among these in democratic fashion, and yet at the same time believe that there is no debate with regard to the unique claims and authority of God, if He exists, or, rather, since He exists.

One can reasonably maintain that the democratic theory of government is by far the best under which to run the City of Man, and yet continue to recognize that the Kingdom of Heaven is still just that. One can passionately believe in democratic processes and parliamentary government without supposing that this has anything to do with God's eternal counsels and His ordinances for the supernatural order. The only elections ever held

in Heaven ended disastrously in the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels! The counting of heads or hands by Pilate did not result in a verdict concerning the Incarnation which is acceptable to any who see in the Lord Jesus their Redeemer and their King; that He came unto His own and His own received Him not involves a grave mystery of theology—of dogma, but is probably without any profound pertinence to the validity of democratic processes.

The will of the people may well be sovereign in temporal matters; temporal matters have been given into our stewardship and so in them we can, nay must, claim popular responsibility. But matters eternal, the things of God with which theology is concerned, are quite another problem. Only God can tell us about them and this He does by revelation; that revelation is authoritative or it is without point. The authoritative nature of revelation is made necessary not by the simplicities of liberty, but by the intricacies of the questions involved.

Theology is the study of God and there is nothing simple in the sense of "popular" about God. It is entirely false to pretend that New Testament theology is simple. It is preposterous to suggest that Protestant theology is simple. No one could possibly read the tortuous speculations of Luther, Calvin or any of the classical Protestant theologians, and then complain of the intricacy of Catholic theology.

We are not so much concerned,

however, with the comparison of our theology with that of the Protestants; we are concerned with the current Protestant effort to contrast our theology with that of the New Testament in terms of the place left to liberty and that accorded authority. Compared with the systematic and carefully defined theology of the Church, New Testament theology is hopelessly complex and puzzling; the proof is the hundreds of creeds into which Protestants have become divided in their effort to determine what the New Testament teaches. Dogmas such as those respecting the Blessed Trinity, original sin, the redemption, eternal damnation, the supernatural life—whatever else you may say of these, they are none of them simple.

Yet the New Testament is replete with them and Jesus Christ not merely talked about them, He talked about little else! Certainly St. Paul, whom a generation ago Protestants used to claim, for some unintelligible reason, as somehow their own, has little or nothing in his writings save dogma: the dogmas of justification, predestination, atonement, ecclesiology, mysteries beyond counting. You may say anything you choose about St. Paul but you cannot accuse him of being "simple" and "free" in his theology. Let one who reads carefully the prologue of St. John's Gospel tell me whether it has that clarity, simplicity and air of religious "democracy" which our "liberal" Protestant friends regret they cannot find in the Church.

And yet, Bishop Oxnam seems to have a point. In approaching these mysteries that the thoughtful Protestant will agree are enormously complex, the Catholic is disposed to welcome the guidance of authority, the Protestant to prefer the moving of the spirit in free enquiry. The Catholic is bound to accept a certain set of dogmas, while the Protestant feels free to accept or reject them. It is, perhaps, noteworthy that while the Catholic accepts religious authority in matters of faith, he is usually temperamentally wary of authority in all other matters. It is also interesting that the Protestant claims a wide liberty in matters of faith, though he, oddly enough, is frequently most deferential to authority in other matters. Perhaps it is well, then, to move to the consideration of the relationship between authority and liberty considered in themselves.

### Liberty Through Law

Are liberty and authority ultimately irreconcilable? Is there not a level on which they complement one another? Are they not correlative rather than mutually antagonistic? Perhaps their relationship one to the other may be suggested by this paradox: liberty can only be secured by laws, and laws, in the moral sense, can only exist among beings endowed with liberty. Where there are no laws or too few, not liberty but slavery exists.

Even the vast and complex legislation of our political society represents a development which, in the

main, guarantees greater liberty. Most of our pyramiding legislation has been written precisely in order to provide more protection to liberty. The so-called "economic royalists," who protest the present development of political authority, do so because they recognize that this growth of authority means, paradoxically, an extension of liberties in which, since these are not their worry, they are not interested. Only that man is free, then, who lives under law; the highest measure of liberty in our complex lives requires an ever more highly developed authority.

In the realm of knowledge, moreover, liberty does not consist in the absence of "dogmas," but in their presence. All truth has its "dogmas" ignorance of which brings with it no real liberty. If I am ignorant of the "dogmas" of mathematics, or the "dogmas" of physics, or the "dogmas" of geography, I am, perhaps, more free in one sense than the man who is handicapped by his knowledge of them. I am "free" to believe that two and two make five; I am "free" to jump without protection from an airplane; I am "free" to set forth in any direction in the hope of reaching the North Pole, but this is not liberty in any reasonable sense. Thomas Edison submits his intellect to the "dogmas" of electrical science and he thereby becomes "free" to avail himself of them, using them for his perfection and our service. In the field of religious faith, the believer submits his intellect to the dogmas



of God's revelation and accordingly becomes free to use them for his perfection and the benefit of mankind. This is assuredly what Christ meant when He said: "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free."

Monsignor Benson used to develop this point effectively. He liked to point out that the soul, like the body, has its proper environment. This environment has its proper laws and these laws are discoverable. Revelation provides the most detailed knowledge of them, but reason is able to discover much in their regard. Prayer, for example, elevates the soul, base thinking degrades it. Many truths with regard to the spiritual order were familiar long before Christ came. Christ came with this object among others: that He might reveal the laws of grace and instruct men in the dogmas essential to the right use of those laws. He came, then, to increase men's liberty by increasing their knowledge. He did on the level of the spiritual and in the realm of grace what the scientist does on the level of matter and in the realm of material energy. By providing us with the truth in their regard, by increasing our knowledge, He makes us more free both to seek and to attain our perfection.

What Christ did in transmitting to the Church the wisdom of heaven, the Church does in transmitting to us the wisdom of Christ. The Church has for its divinely established function to take the revelation of Jesus Christ and by

her dogma and discipline to render it comprehensible and effective in the lives of men. The Church does this systematically, and the system under which she lives, works and teaches is one which Jesus Christ provided.

Christ did not condemn the Pharisaic system because it was a system; indeed, He Himself founded a system, a sacramental system, a hierarchical system, a dogmatic system. Christ condemned the Pharisaic system because it was Pharisaic. He gave us liberty, to be sure, but it was the liberty of the sons of God—and it is only by dogma that we can come to understand what it means to be a son of God. The core of Catholic authoritarianism is in its dogma; but so also the roots of spiritual liberty lie in dogma. The fruit of dogma is liberty, and the perfection of liberty is love—love of a truth made known through dogma or, alas, not at all.

Ours, then, is a dogmatic faith but it is not on that account the enemy of the freedom which Christ came to bring. Yet Bishop Oxnham and his followers try to make their point by another route; they argue that, however spiritually free our dogma may make us, it compels us to adopt an intransigent, "undemocratic" attitude toward those of our neighbors who believe otherwise than do we.

Not all non-Catholics so misrepresent our position. Dr. W. H. Mallock, a distinguished Protestant theologian, was able to write these words:

Never was there a religious body, except the Roman, that laid the intense stress she does on all her dogmatic teachings, and had yet the justice that comes of sympathy for those that cannot receive them. She condemns no goodness, she condemns even no earnest worship, though it be outside her pale. On the contrary, she declares explicitly that a knowledge of "the one true God, our Creator and Lord," may be attained to by the "natural light of human reason," meaning by "reason," the mind unenlightened by revelation; and she declares those to be anathema who deny this.

The holy and humble men of heart who do not know her, or who in good faith reject her, she commits with confidence to God's uncovenanted mercies; and these she knows are infinite; but except as revealed to her, she can of necessity say nothing distinct about them.

It is admitted by the world at large that of her supposed bigotry she has not bitterer or more extreme exponents than the Jesuits; and this is what a Jesuit theologian says upon this matter: "A heretic, so long as he believes his sect to be more, or equally, deserving of belief, has no obligation to believe the Church . . . and when men who have been brought up in heresy are persuaded from boyhood that we impugn and attack the word of God, that we are idolaters, pestilent deceivers, and are therefore to be shunned as pestilence, they cannot, while this persuasion lasts, with a safe conscience hear us."

Thus for those outside her fold the Church has one condemnation

only and it is one which any upright man would make: the condemnation of insincerity in religion, the refusal to seek God's will while professing to revere divine authority; the refusal to follow God's word while professing to have found it. Catholics are guilty of insincerity when, claiming to have the authoritative revelation of Christ's law of love, they nonetheless withhold their charity from men of good will. Protestants, and especially "liberals," appear to us to be insincere when they proclaim their readiness to defend the right to their faith even of Catholics, and then, within the self-same speeches, vilify us because we have presumed to defend that faith ourselves.

Despite the "political" attacks to which we alluded in beginning, there are good reasons to hope that a more exact focus on the person and teaching of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, may help reduce the sense of tension among Christians between the proper place of authority in revealed religion and the divinely intended part of freedom in the perfection of human personality. Specifically, one has reason to hope that, if the partisan spirit almost intrinsic to Protestantism can be restrained by the larger and more generous view, the Catholic understanding that we are both morally bound and spiritually free may be better appreciated.

*The problem of nationalism is a problem arising out of an exclusiveness in charity. Through the Church, men should become united in Christ to achieve a union which cannot but produce social reconciliation between nations.*

## Education—

### *for the Postwar World\**

OF ALL the problems that menace the future of the generation which will depend on us for guidance, one especially complicates their lives and challenges us. It is not any one of the problems popular writers usually tell us confront young people. It is not the problem of personal self-adjustment to the world, the problem of finding their personal places in the world their fathers leave to them; youth cannot carve personal niches for themselves in the walls of a world that has crashed about them. The task facing the generation we are asked to guide is the formidable work of building a whole world order out of the ruins of the economic, social, and

political scheme in which their ancestors placed, alas, their sadly deceived trust. Never before has the task of building a universal society on the ashes of world-wide ruin loomed before our race as it appears to do today.

We in America are witnessing all around us a reaffirmation of national values and of national spirit. Much of this intensification of national sentiment is undoubtedly justified in the light of certain real threats to our national security, and it is beyond question entirely reasonable that our executives and legislators should increase the natural patriotic vigilance which is the indispensable condition of national security.

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\*A paper read at the 19th annual meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, Chicago, Ill., December 29-30, 1943.

Products of the liberal arts tradition, however, bound by their values to observe a larger measure of detachment still consistent with national loyalty, have, it seems to me, the responsibility of remembering that such revivals of national emotion as we are now facing, however necessary political and social crises may sometimes make them, are never without grave danger to the human spirit; they are never without grave danger of that immoderate exaggeration which leads to unbridled nationalism, aggressive imperialism, and the shattering of human solidarity among the nations. The partisans of nationalism too often conclude by denying the very existence of universal values, of human interests transcending national lines of division, and therefore, in point of practical effect, they hamper and impede the progress towards that sane internationalism without which the hope of peace and social security, at home or abroad, is an empty illusion.

### A Papal Program

To the Catholic sociologist, teacher and philosopher, the Sovereign Pontiffs have not neglected to provide abundant directives and eloquent leadership in this so urgent matter. There is in the public pronouncements of the five most recent Pontiffs an integral educative program inspired by a philosophy of Catholic humanism and supernatural ethics calculated to produce, if it be faithfully followed, an "international-mindedness," a sane uni-

versalism, which will supplement, integrate, and perfect the legitimate and necessary psychological and social demands of nationalism. To that program, in its briefest possible statement, I invite your attention today.

It should not be surprising to any student of the history of human thought that the Bishops of Rome, Vicars of the Kingdom of Christ, have undertaken to call philosophers to this pacific work. Indeed, the work of guiding men toward an eventual social solidarity consistent with the natural unity of the human family is a work which philosophers and priests alone can do—philosophers, because it is above all an educative work; philosophers and priests, because it is an educative work to which religion can make, and historically has made, the most important contribution.

This dream of a universal order among humans is part of the heritage we owe the Judeo-Christian tradition; it is as old as our religious history. It is implicit in the vocation of Israel and it is echoed in the words of the prophets of Israel, as Daniel and Isaiaas and Osee, even during the long generations in which Israel disciplined herself by religious isolation from the Gentile world. It is the most characteristic social doctrine of the Christian ethic; it is explicit in the social teaching of the New Testament, finding its most unmistakable expression in the words by which St. Paul described the Church of Christ, left as a leaven in the social world, as a kingdom

"where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free" (Col. 3:11).

It is a dream which survived the secularization of Western civilization after the Renaissance, so that even when the religious values of early medieval Europe, values around which the original hope of world brotherhood had been spun, even when these had been denied or denatured by skepticism and irreligion, still that dream haunted the minds of those men who were sensitive to the unnaturalness of the divisions which unbridled nationalism brought into the Western world.

Hence a statesman like the minister of Henri IV, the diplomat Sully, though among the first statesmen to insist on the principle of nationality and the necessity for safeguarding the natural dispositions and racial characteristics on which it is based, was nevertheless haunted by the ancient religious dream of social unity when he longed to introduce his *Grand Dessein*, the great plan of a Universal Commonwealth.

So, too, the dream of human solidarity survived in the speculations of the legalist Grotius, founder of modern International Law, as well as in the excessively literal "reformed" Christianity of William Penn, whose plea for a sovereign League of sovereign Nations has a curiously contemporary air. Indeed, on this point, if on no other, even that most thoroughly naturalistic of social philosophers, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was unconsciously influ-

enced by the ancient religious ideals of Western civilization when he argued that patriotism alone will never bring peace to mankind, and that if peace is to come we must build a "great city of the world," one in which states and peoples are but individuals before the law.

Even in the intellectual anarchy of 18th century Germany, the dream of human solidarity still found thoughtful men willing to pursue the hope of realizing it. Lessing gave the elements of this dream powerful expression in his treatise on *The Education of the Human Race*, and Immanuel Kant pauses in his treatise, *A Suggestion for Universal History*, to write in capitals this sentence: "The problem of a satisfactory constitution for any nation is bound up with the problem of law between nations, and the one cannot be solved without the other," and he therefore pleads for "an education of the spirit for all citizens in every country" in order that "nations will give up their lawless lives of conflict and enter into a society of nations (*Volkerbund*)."

Even the secular liberalism of the *Risorgimento* in Mazzini's Italy, at the height of its nationalistic fervor and its professed break with the past, did not turn its back on the ancient hope of a social order greater than the sovereign state. Mazzini believed intensely in nationality, but he recognized that it is only an element in the larger human whole. The Italian republicans of the last century were not wont to express indebtedness to the

religious tradition of their fatherland, but the impartial critic will sense that much indeed of Italy's centuries of religious culture is distilled into such passages from Mazzini as this from his *Essay on the Duties of Man*:

We improve with the improvement of humanity, nor without the improvement of the whole can you hope that your own moral and material conditions will improve. Generally speaking, you cannot, even if you would, separate your life from that of humanity; you live in it, by it, for it. Ask yourselves then whenever you do an action in the sphere of your country, or your family: If what I am doing were done by all and for all, would it advantage or injure humanity? and if your conscience answers, it would injure humanity, desist; desist, even if it seem to you that an immediate advantage for your country or your family would ensue from your action. Be apostles of this faith, apostles of the brotherhood of nations, and of the unity of the human race—a principle admitted today in theory, but denied in practice. Be such apostles wherever and in whatever way you are able.

It is with the thought in mind of this indebtedness to religion for their own highest social ideals, even on the part of those who today profess least to love her, that a gifted European poet has written in tribute to the Church:

"You bless those too who no longer know of your blessing.

The world's compassion is your runaway daughter, and all the rights of man live on your bounty,

All the wisdom of men has been learned from you.

You are the hidden writing under all their signs. You are the hidden current in the depths of their waters.

You are the secret power of their enduring."

It may easily be, however, that the war may, by intensifying the spirit of nationalism, set back much of mankind's progress toward a more nearly human order; if this is not to happen, education must do a most radical work of reform. Nationalism has in many important respects inspired the philosophy of education by which most modern national states have come to greatness, and he would ill-prepare himself to achieve a philosophy of education for the postwar world who failed to realize this. Nationalism as a faith and as a philosophy has been so wholeheartedly accepted, especially in the upper and middle classes, that it has become the chief driving force in the lives of the masses of mankind. It has become so because the instrumentalities of mass education have been perfected and utilized for its propaganda. Nationalism, being a cultural phenomenon, is not "in the blood"; it cannot be transmitted biologically from one person to another; it is an "acquired characteristic" and the method of its acquisition, as of any cultural product, is education.

The argument that liberal education will help provide the solution to the problem of nationalism is

strengthened by the fact, insisted upon by Pope Pius XI, that defective and vicious education has been at once a principal cause of the problem and a chief means of aggravating it. Analyzing why, "thanks to an intemperance of desire, sheltering itself under the appearance of public good or love of country . . . there is no peace in our day," Pope Pius XI finds the cause of the evil ultimately to lie in private and public apostasy from God and His Incarnate Son, but proximately to lie in false and inadequate education. Education then, or rather mal-education is the means by which false nationalism has done its work. It is therefore by education that the Church has sought to combat this evil in the forms in which it comes within the scope of her teaching and mission.

### The Role of History

The student of papal pronouncements on nationalism soon discerns the broad indications the Popes have given as to what must be the *content* of the education by which nationalism as a principle of social and political division may be corrected. Analyzed at length in his brief *Saepenumero considerantes*, the value of historical studies as a moral discipline is indicated by Pope Leo XIII in a published letter to an Italian historian; in this letter he declared that every age has recognized the utility of these studies as a means of shaping and directing souls.

The study of their own legitimate

national historical traditions, Pope Pius XI argues in the case of the religious separatists of the Oriental nations, will lead them to a recognition of how closely related are the origins of their traditions with those of the community whence they are separated. Out of this recognition will grow that sense of "solidarity in time," which, together with that of "solidarity in space," is a psychological basis of common society.

If the study of their own history will lead a people back to their historical bonds with others, so the study of the history of other peoples will develop an understanding productive of that sympathy which is a natural predisposition to charity. Because no other subject admits so readily of perversion into an instrument of international antagonisms and exaggerated nationalism as does history, Pope Pius seeks the reform of methods of teaching history, and the sober use of historical education as a most important means of correcting nationalistic excess.

Thus the Holy Father saw the motion picture as an instrument of propaganda which may be made "a valuable auxiliary of instruction and education," one which "while capable also of creating prejudices among individuals and misunderstandings among nations," can be ennobled to "impart a better knowledge of the history and the beauties of the fatherland and of other countries, to present truth and virtue under attractive forms, to create or at least to favor understanding

among nations, social classes, and races . . . and contribute positively to the genesis of a just social order in the world" (*Vigilanti Cura*, AAS, XXVIII, p. 256).

### Christian Humanism

In the other departments of formal education where national traditions or interests are a preoccupation, the rule most consistent with papal directives would be to infuse these with that emphasis on *universal elements* in which consists the "*sane humanism*" in formal education for which Pope Pius XI pleads. Especially in the fields of letters, philosophy and kindred studies the Pope finds a necessity for recurring to those classical models which form the common patrimony of human education and provide a cultural universality which may be adapted "in conformity with the exigencies of our times" (*Divini Illius Magistri*, AAS, XXII, p. 80).

Christianity and its moral teaching concur perfectly with a sane humanism, as Pius XI implies when he declares: "We are constantly crying out against whatever is not fully and truly human, and *therefore* Christian, against that which is inhuman, and *therefore anti-Christian*" (Allocution to Roman Prelature, Christmas, 1938). Human wisdom, moreover, may serve as a mighty instrument for the establishment of international order and universal collaboration such as is required in correction of nationalism's excesses, but it is not sufficient so to serve in the absence of moral

(and so religious) education. The Popes therefore insist not merely on humanism, but on that Christian humanism which blends with human learning supernatural wisdom, and subordinates all things not to reason alone, nor to revelation alone, but to *reason and faith*.

The necessity of religious education is directly linked by the Popes with the solution of the general social problem and the particular problem of human society divided by excessive nationalism. "Peace consists in the tranquillity of order," argues Pope Benedict XV, quoting St. Augustine, "and therefore it follows that peace cannot be restored either to individuals or to society save when order, once it has been troubled, has been restored. But this cannot be restored unless individuals and society know what are the relationships the harmony of which constitutes the order desired by God in the world, all of which faith teaches us" (*Actes de Benoit XV*, t. 11, pp. 111 ss.).

If disorder reigns in the world, argues the Pope, it is because "the rights of God in human society have been denied, the supremacy of the soul over the body has been denied, and so has the duty of practical love toward's one's neighbor." Therefore, to restore order to an international society that is torn by a nationalism which is atheistic, which accentuates physical differences over spiritual likeness, and which abhors "practical charity towards one's neighbor" if the latter be a "foreigner," there is required



complete reeducation in these basic religious truths: first, the necessity for the practical acceptance of the sovereign dominion of the Creator over all His works: secondly, the affirmation of the primacy of the spiritual over the physical; finally, the sincere and practical love of one's own kind. Without this three-fold harmony, no "tranquillity of order" is possible.

"No education is capable of achieving the end [of establishing order in human society]," wrote Pope Pius XI to the American hierarchy, "save that in which the very inculcation of learning is grounded on religion and virtue"; nor does the Pope mean here anything less than a strictly religious, i.e., other-worldly, approach to the study of social problems. And it is here that the Church stands ready to make her chief educative contribution to the building of a better order.

For the Church does her utmost to teach and to train men, and to educate them; and by the intermediary of her bishops and clergy diffuses her salutary teachings far and wide. She strives to influence the *mind* and the heart so that all may willingly yield themselves to be formed and guided by the commandments of God. It is precisely in this *fundamental and momentous matter, on which everything depends* that the Church possesses a power peculiarly her own. The agencies which she employs are given to her by Jesus Christ Himself for the very purpose of reaching the hearts of men, and derive their efficiency from God. They alone can reach the innermost heart

and conscience, and bring men to act from a motive of duty, to resist their passions and appetites, to love God and their fellowmen with a love that is singular and supreme, and to break down courageously every barrier which obstructs the path to a life of virtue (*Rerum Novarum, Acta Leonis*, XI, pp. 116-17).

The efficacious means of education which the Church possesses and to which Pope Leo here appeals have frequently and directly been referred by the Popes to the particular problem of nationalism and the division of which it has been the cause. For the most part these means constitute or flow from the Church's universal character, the character by which the Church, as we realize, is the foremost among the *de iure* and *de facto* bonds of the human community. In the education of the mind, the Church adds to instruction in the manifold natural bonds of human solidarity further instruction in a common supernatural Faith, the dogmas of which are grounded on human solidarity in one Creator, one first parent, one Redeemer, and one last end, so that Pope Pius XI could declare that the "erroneous idea" of exaggerated nationalism embodies "a whole doctrinal spirit contrary to the faith of Christ" (Discourse to the Religious of the Cenacle, *Osservatore Romano*, July 17, 1938). This common faith Pope Leo declares to be capable of uniting men across the differences which constitute their national characters; history records that its power so to

unite men was manifest when "it was looked upon as the common inheritance of one and all; when civilized nations, separated by distance, character, and habits, in spite of frequent disagreements and warfare on other points were united by Christian faith in all that concerned religion" *Praeclara gratulationis*, Acta Leonis, XIV, p. 198).

### A Pedagogy of Imitation

Thus the Church alone possesses those means by which the supernatural perfection of individuals, their education in the full sense, for balanced nationalism may be achieved; but also in the narrower sphere of strictly moral education she possesses a pedagogy peculiarly adapted to providing the inspiration and guidance necessary for producing in individuals, and therefore in nations, an exemplary national patriotism harmoniously blended with supernatural charity.

This pedagogy we may call the pedagogy of the imitation of the saints, and we may note the pointed manner in which the Popes, notably Pope Pius XI, have allowed to pass no opportunity of employing this method of moral teaching, pointing out the exemplification of the Catholic harmony between national and international charity in the lives of the saints proposed for imitation.

It would perhaps be inaccurate to claim that the motive of the Popes in certain of the canonizations they have performed has been precisely to provide models of Christian internationalism to an excessive-

ly nationalistic generation. At the same time, however, we may note that the Popes themselves have, in canonizing certain saints, made topical reference to the fittingness of proposing in these times saints in whom patriotism and internal charity find a blend so happy as to make them providential exemplars of Christian international morality. They have expressly commended such saints to the imitation of individuals in all nations, and especially of their compatriots. The Church's saints are, then, a bond uniting men across national lines, but also, in the personal example they provide, they are an educative means of realizing that bond morally in the lives of individuals.

The saints may thus serve as a *means* in Christian moral education. It is, however, in the *end* of Christian education that its chief claim to provide the solution of excessive nationalism lies.

The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to cooperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is to *form Christ Himself* in those regenerated by Baptism, according to the emphatic expression of the Apostle: "My little children, for whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). For the true Christian must live a supernatural life in Christ: "Christ who is your life" (Col. 3:4), and display it in all his actions: "That the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (II Cor. 4:11) (*Divini illius Magistri*, AAS, XXII, p. 83).

The entire difference between the

supernatural morality of Catholic education and the inadequate morality humanism provides may be expressed in the light of this definition: humanism teaches the person "all things are yours"; Catholicism adds, "and you are Christ's and Christ is God's."

### Contribution of the Church

Naturally before any world order can become a reality there are tremendous political, economic and social problems to be solved. Many of these are of a technical order, and in them the Church claims no special competence. Before any political or social organization can function, however, there must exist among the people who will comprise it a previous will for its existence. The great tragedy of the League of Nations, for example, was that it attempted to function in a vacuum, and was set up without reference to any psychological or moral dispositions in its regard on the part of the people at large. Every government and every organization depends for its very life on the loyalty and hearty acceptance of the multitude within and under it. To the educative work required before this acceptance and loyalty can have roots deep enough to guarantee its survival despite inevitable discouragement

and reverses, the Church can make an indispensable contribution.

Indeed, one may reasonably assert the Church's contribution is the only one which cuts through to the basic difficulty which impedes the realization of world order. This problem, according to Nicholas Murray Butler, may be thought of as the modern and social form of the ancient philosophical problem of the antinomy between "the One and the Many." This problem, in its social form, the Church of Christ has from the beginning been obliged to meet and to solve. The problem of nationalism and of human divisions which the philosophy of nationalism has intensified is a problem arising out of an *exclusiveness* in charity. Through the Church, however, men become united with Christ, and through His charity, diffused in our hearts, they achieve a union with one another which cannot do other than produce unheard-of wonders in social reconciliation. In Christ, who is the Head of every man, all men find themselves united spiritually with one another; and so, by a truth as old as Saint Paul, the Church solves the social problem of the "One" and the "Many" *for we, being many are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another* (Rom. 12:4,5).

## —The Church and the Intellectual—

THE ANTI-INTELLECTUAL attitude is more unbecoming and embarrassing in Catholics because it is so entirely inconsistent with any authentic Catholic position. So many of the heresies which have wounded the Church and despoiled her of whole nations have been voluntarist heresies, anti-intellectual in their roots and pretensions, that it is bitterly ironic when anti-intellectualism threatens to become characteristic of those who have remained faithful to her obedience.

One wonders whether Catholics themselves always appreciate the extent to which the battles of the Church against the modern heresies have been at one and the same time battles against the heresy of anti-intellectualism. Luther's "*stat pro ratione voluntas*," his voluntaristic *fides fiducialis* with its repudiation of the intellectual elements in the act of faith, and his violent but typical description of the intellect as the "devil's whore," are as much the evidence of his departure from Catholic traditions as any of his theses nailed to the chapel door. The blind fatalism of Calvin, the perverse austerities of Jansenism, the sentimentality and exaltation of instinct or religious emotion which, for all its show of scholarship, characterized Modernism, are all typical of the heresies which have divided the Christian flock in these last four centuries. In defending supernatural revelation against these the Church was at the same time defending the validity of natural reason and the primacy of the intellect over the will, the emotions, the instincts or any of the other faculties to which voluntarism has always appealed, whether in Luther's dogma, the moral theories of Jansenius, the religious psychology of the moderns or the political philosophy of totalitarianism.

We usually think of the Council of Trent, the Vatican Council and the Syllabus against Modernism in terms of the defense of revealed dogmas, and such, of course, they were. But he understands them poorly who fails to perceive that they were frequently Catholic affirmations of the validity of reason as well as of the reality of revelation, and that they bore witness to the essential part of rational elements even in the supernatural act of faith, and to the divine origin of the primacy and rights of the intellect in the natural order.

It is, therefore, a problem for the Church when any who might be taken as her representatives in any sense in the world of the campus,

the press, or the forum reveal contempt for that "wild, living intellect of man" of which Cardinal Newman spoke, or cynicism about the slow, sometimes faltering, but patient, persevering processes by which the intellectual seeks to wrest some measure of order from the chaos about us.

Then there is a problem which we can best call spiritual or apostolic. What is the vocation of the intellectual in the life of the Church? How can he best bear his specifically intellectual witness, a witness which may involve a living martyrdom, given the temper of the times and the suspicion with which even his own will all too often views his gifts and his works? How shall we persuade intellectuals to find in Christ, the *Logos*, the Eternal Word made flesh to dwell among us, a divine prototype of their special vocation and unique dignity, as we have persuaded workers to find their model in the Carpenter's Son, Christian youth to find a model in the youthful Christ's obedience to Joseph and Mary at Nazareth, and patriotic citizens to see the exemplar of their proper loyalty in the Christ who paid the coin of tribute and wept tears of predilection over the capital city of his nation? A spirituality of Christian humanism, centered about the concept of Christ the Divine Intellectual, is a critical need of our generation if the evidence presented here proves as much as we have good reason to believe it does.

The problem of the apostolic role of the Catholic intellectual cannot be too often emphasized. Father Raymond L. Bruckberger, O.P., our friendly French critic, in an article in *Harper's Magazine* for February, 1956 on the patriotic responsibilities of the American intellectual, makes a point worthy of meditation by Catholic intellectuals who sincerely seek to understand their contemporary religious responsibilities. The American intellectual often tends to say that his country has failed him, that she will not give him the honor which is his due, and that he feels like a spiritual exile. Perhaps the contrary is more nearly true, and the American intellectual is more deeply missed than is at first apparent. When the intellectual turns his back on his country and confines himself to berating her, his place remains empty, all the while that he complains that he has no place at all. A more valiant generation of European intellectuals accepted it as their destiny to be unappreciated and mocked for false prophets; in this they found a secret consolation and often their abiding glory.

Catholic intellectuals have a point for meditation here. Intellectually

gifted Catholics suffer all too often from a "whining" tendency in their attitude toward the Church. They lament that they are not sufficiently appreciated or encouraged. They berate the indifference of their fellow Catholics to their vocation. In a curious paradox on the lips of Christians, particularly Christians with presumably keener powers of insight and understanding than the rest, they protest against being made martyrs. Where in the New Testament, the Church of the Fathers, or the history of the saints from Paul to Thomas More were the genuinely thoughtful promised any other lot, whether at the hands of the world or at the hands of their uncomprehending brethren, than contradiction and constant testing?

Finally, and urgently, there is an intensely practical problem in this matter of American Catholic intellectual life. It is the problem of how we can increase the proportions of authentic scholars and trained competent intellectuals among us. Statistics have been offered recently which point up and analyze the dearth of Catholic lay scholars. These statistics have been challenged by those who resented certain of their implications, although their resentment did not inspire much in the way of effective refutation of the facts.

In the early days of the Church in America, humble Catholics struggled to retain the Faith in an anti-Catholic atmosphere. These early pioneers built schools and churches which are responsible for the survival of Catholic America today. These foundations for growth and expansion have been firmly rooted within the American tradition in our soil, but future progress and expansion will come only through a determined effort based upon the development of Catholic scholarship. We have a need for an "Apostolate of distinction."—From BISHOP WRIGHT's *introduction to AMERICAN CATHOLICS AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE* by JOHN TRACY ELLIS. Reprinted with the permission of the Heritage Foundation, 2720 W. Devon Ave., Chicago 45, Ill. Reprints of Msgr. Ellis' book are now available at this address for \$1.00 the copy.

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*Who shall deny that the Regnum Dei, the City of God, called together out of every tribe, tongue and nation, powerfully disposes the wills of men to more universal loyalties which are desperately needed to build a truly humane, world-wide City of Man?*

## The Mass— *and International Order\**

**A**T FIRST statement our subject may seem forced and factitious. Even to some Catholics, certainly to many of their neighbors, there is probably scant connection between what appears to be the almost casual devotion which is daily Mass and the titanic problem which is international order—or rather, disorder.

And yet the briefest reflection reveals the propriety and pertinence of our subject. One can certainly speak of the Church and international order, for the Church is the soul of society; it holds together, more than could any purely natural

bonds, those parts of the international community which are subject to its beneficent influence. Now the Mass is the Church at prayer, the Church achieving that which she was instituted to do. The Church is never more surely and more perfectly herself than she is in the Mass. Wherefore, since we speak of the Church and international order, we may equally speak of the Mass and international order, for it is in the Mass that the Church does supremely and sublimely that by which, in other and lesser ways, she reconciles men with one another and mankind with God; thus creating the

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\*An address at the 16th National Liturgical Conference, Worcester, Mass., August 24, 1955.

spiritual climate in which alone an international order can have enduring growth.

So, too, we can assuredly speak of "Christ and international order." Christians everywhere, whatever their understanding of Christ, are talking more and more of Christ as the hope of the world. In their ecumenical gatherings non-Catholic Christians have been debating whether Christ is the hope of the world only in an eschatological sense or whether He is also the source and the center of a social gospel by which He is the hope of the here and now and the here below. Alas, sometimes one might fear that the Christ of the social gospel has replaced, among many Christians, Christ the Father of the world to come, so that men find it more easy to speak of Christ and international order than to speak of Christ and eternal life.

### Christ Our Hope

Catholics understand that Christ is the hope of our lives both considered in their total and eternal sense and in their temporal and social aspects. They understand that it is by the gospel and the redemptive action of Christ, by His every word and work, that individuals are saved for eternity and that nations are pacified in time. Christ is at once the Lord of time and of eternity; it is by Him that we are both redeemed from sin and ransomed from its social consequences. Reconciling each one of us with the Father, He is our hope for the world

to come; reconciling us with one another, breaking down the walls of division that were between us, He is the hope, by prerequisite, so to say, of the international order of the world in which we now live. It is in the Mass that Christ is still at work among us in His ministry of reconciliation and redemption. It is from the Mass that His gospel derives in each generation the energies by which it renews the face of the earth.

Even were we to think of the Mass merely as a prayer without reference to its deeper theological realities, its role in creating a spiritual atmosphere indispensable for the right ordering of international society would still be incomparable. Pope Pius XI, preoccupied at all times with the achievement of a truly humane world order, frequently wrote of the manner in which prayer acts as a bond of the human community and as a counteractive to the forces which divide mankind. Men who in every nation pray to the same God, he argued, will not fall victims to the cult of their own nation or allow the exclusive interests of their own race or tribe to separate them from the children of God wherever these may be. He spoke of prayer as the common language of the spiritual family which comprises all the children of God, a language which expresses a "common family feeling" and constitutes a bond transcending all regional or national divisions. Prayer, indeed, is the bond of that even deeper human solidarity which rises above



not merely regional and local, but even temporal divisions: the communion of saints.

The social implications of this admirable doctrine of the mysterious but real solidarity which prevails among the sons of God, living and dead, have been frequently explored by the thoughtful. These have pointed out how, in the communion of saints, even the most cloistered contemplatives make their contribution to the social order through their prayers. Pope Pius XI reflected on how even the blessed dead, still at one with their fellow citizens here below in the communion of saints, continue even in heaven to influence by their suffrages the destinies of the nations to which they belonged, as in the case, he said, of St. Thomas More, and the humane common good of which they were the devout servants.

### Solidarity Through Prayer

It is, then, chiefly through prayer that religion serves to create the spiritual solidarity which must be the prelude to any hoped-for orderly unity in international society. The late Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, reminds us of the special excellence in this regard of the prayer life of Christians as contrasted with that of even the most refined pagans of old. He quotes from Fustel de Coulanges how in the ancient city worship was local and divisive. "Each city had its corps of priests independent of any foreign authority. There was no link between the priests of two

cities...no exchange of teaching or of rites...Religion was quite localized and quite civic in the original sense, i.e., proper to each city."

What the pagan religion lacked, modern society has within its reach. Before Christ there was certainly an infinitely adorable God, but no infinite adorer. Now, on the other hand, thanks to the incarnation, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ serves as the *universal man* who renders by His prayer all the honor that God the Father should receive from all creation, and serves in His capacity as the new Adam and the High Priest of the new law, as the living link between all cities.

If this be true on every level of prayer, it is pre-eminently true of the prayer that is the Mass. The French Cardinal's analysis of the destiny of the Catholic intellectual in terms of the Mass is worth quoting entire.

The Catholic intellectual of today has an exceptional mission. He must replace under God's dominion culture, which is now cut off piecemeal for so many centuries from theology. The Catholic must reply with Christian realism to positivist theories seeking to *possess* the world without *offering* it to God, or to Jansenist moral theories which condemn the temporal order and humanism as sinful, and leave people content at Mass to offer the world without possessing it. The Catholic's motto will be to possess in order to offer, to conquer everything—matter, without which there would be no bread, no wine, no host; and spirit, intellect the basis and instrument of faith and love—in order to re-

turn everything to God. The universe is like an unexplored continent, going to the first occupant. Christian thinkers will have to be able to get there first to plant the cross on every corner of it. The extension of the boundaries of the known world is an enlargement of the material we bring to the Offertory and so of the redemption.

At the same time, while our modern task means primarily the "recapitulation" of a universe in childbirth, it has thereby no call to be exclusive. Human distress and defeat, sin and error, moral corruption and sickness, social oppression, political and international hatred, cry out for deliverance, for consoling and healing. Flesh and blood humanity, full of its faults and sorrows, is what the Offertory has to gather together, and what the Mass must lead to the heart of God. Yet here, even more than a dedication to God of the known universe, there is needed a consecration and a redemption, involving something extra; offering is not enough, for a sacrifice is necessary. And for this it is not sufficient to be baptized; a priest is needed.

That priest is, of course, Christ. He, at once Priest and Victim, is present in the Mass as the new Adam speaking and acting for all the race as the universal victim, uniquely adequate to atone for the sins of all mankind. Of each Mass, as of Calvary, the fruits are such that we may acclaim Christ, present at the one as at the other, in the words of the Introit to the Mass of the Most Precious Blood: *Redemisti nos, Domine, in sanguine tuo, ex omni tribu, et lingua, et populo, et natione: et fecisti nos Deo nostro regnum.*

### Toward World Order

Who shall deny that the *regnum Dei*, the City of God thus called together out of every tribe and tongue and nation, powerfully disposes the wills of men to the more universal loyalties which are needed to build a truly humane world-wide City of Man? Each of us who is privileged to stand at the altar as a vicar for Christ in the exercise of His priesthood, makes his contribution, strictly spiritual and without partisanship of any kind, to the realization of a world order which, while it includes political aspects, is primarily moral and religious in its postulates. The meanest and the least of us who are priests take on something at least of the universality, dignity and majesty of Christ for the hour that we stand at the altar for Mass. Whatever his personal limitations or individual defects, then at least the priest speaks to God for all mankind as does Christ. What he does "for our salvation and that of the whole world," to quote the Canon of the Mass, he does as the ambassador of all humanity, the agent of the new Adam. Again Cardinal Suhard gives modern expression to the ancient truth concerning the universal and unifying role of the priest at the altar when he writes:

He re-unites (human society) completely and offers it with the Host in his outstretched hands in the name of the Church, to the Father, by the Son, and in the Holy Spirit; the priest is in the world, but also the whole world is

in the priest. It is he who lifts it up to God. He introduces and accredits it to Him, not through his own power or by delegation from the people, but by the enabling power of Christ, the unique mediator, with whom he is identified more truly at the altar than anywhere else.

A function so sublime, so universal, necessarily transcends considerations of social class, national background, racial origin or political preference in the priest who stands at the altar. All this is what Gertrude von Le Fort meant when she wrote: "The priest at the altar has no face..." He has no color, no comeliness, no purely personal qualities good or bad. He has no virtues or vices, nothing individual which commends or discredits him. He takes on all his priestly significance from Christ, the Son of Man, the Universal Redeemer, the sole priest of the new law.

Everything about him at the altar emphasizes how impersonal is the priest's individual part and how universal is his sacerdotal function. He wears liturgical vestments which disassociate him—or should!—from the fads and the modes of his place and period. He speaks a liturgical language—like that which, please God, will continue to be the universal language of a civilization still *Latin* in its healthiest roots—and he conforms, or should, by rubric and rite to liturgical requirements which again emphasize the universality of his function and the relative insignificance of himself and of his personal impulses and preferences.

Thus in the liturgy the Church contributes uniquely and mightily to the organic vitality of a truly humane world organization. This was the theme of our present Holy Father in his broadcast to the recent International Eucharistic Congress in Brazil. The Holy Father was quick to point out the social implications of the spiritual dogmas he enunciated:

The earth is but a speck in the immensity of the universe! However, the Eucharistic Sacrifice transforms it into an immense thurible that moves through space and exhales spirals of infinite glory to the Creator. . . . This mystery of unity, by incorporating and almost identifying the faithful with Christ, tends to unite them into one single family and one sole body in which beats one heart alone, one soul alone, and in which each member is as zealous of the well-being of others as of his own, and even more so. . . . Thus the Redeemer and King will establish in each His kingdom of peace and love, of justice and sanctity, according to the divine promises, and *even in that which is temporal*, there shall be a kingdom of order and progress, one of tranquillity, harmony and of true prosperity.

It is well to underscore the phrase "even in that which is temporal." For here is the assertion by the Holy Father of that optimism concerning the power of grace to transform even the secular order which is so often absent from the thinking of the "angelists," those of the faithful who too patly isolate the supernatural, the gospel, and the action of the Church from the everyday

concerns of the temporal and political order. Here the Holy Father provides the ground for our discussing the relationship of the Mass to international order.

In his message to the Eucharistic Congress in Brazil within these recent weeks, the Holy Father spoke in a tradition already eloquently developed by his predecessors Pope Benedict XV and Pope Pius XI. The Christian reconciliation of nations is achieved more securely by International Eucharistic Congresses than by any other spiritual means, Pope Benedict XV wrote, since thus the members of the several nations are brought together in common worship of the Way, the Truth and the Life for societies as well as for individuals. Pope Pius XI frequently spoke of the social role of the Eucharist as the most dynamic and effective of the forces by which the Church makes her contribution to international order among the divided nations.

No living voice speaking on the lofty levels of international leadership has more consistently argued for the need for an organized international community than has that of the reigning Holy Father. Compared with his clear and unqualified assertions of the necessity and nature of a world society, the declarations of even those political chieftains with reputations for clarity and outspokenness have been hedging and cautious indeed whenever there has been question of the extension of federalism, frank limitations on national sovereignty, dis-

armament or any other points which arouse controversy but which must be faced before a decent human community can be brought together out of the divided and antagonistic nations. The Holy Father has sometimes clearly offended the ultranationalistic and isolationist spirit of many of his own people, not only in this country, but wherever else the sensitive spirit of undisciplined nationalism dies hard. He is confident, no doubt, that in the final issue all superficial commitments of a narrowly partisan and purely political character will yield to the higher and more universal loyalties of those in every land who share the solidarity of one Lord, one faith and one baptism; who are made one Body because nourished by one Bread; who, at their several altars, are quickened and united by the life-giving energies of the Holy Sacrifice.

### Catholic Responsibility

Chateaubriand recognized how the Eucharist announces the reunion of mankind into one great family, inculcating the cessation of enmities and the commencement of a new law which makes no distinction between Jew or Gentile, but invites all the children of Adam to sit down at the same table. Catholics of our day who are genuine in their desire to follow the dogmatic and moral instructions of the Holy See will meditate at one and the same time on what are two sides of the same problem: the pronouncements of the Holy See concerning the special re-

sponsibility of Catholics towards the achievement of an international community and his pronouncements concerning the place of the Mass in the lives of individuals and nations.

The Holy Father has said that there is no group of human beings so favorably predisposed, in breadth and depth, for international understanding as Catholics should be. He has said that they, above all, must realize that they are called upon to overcome every vestige of nationalistic narrowness, and to seek a genuine fraternal encounter of people with people. He has reminded them that Christian peoples must be conscious of the brotherly ties that bind them to each other and that they must not await the threshold of death and the dawn of eternity before realizing the practical corollaries of their spiritual fraternity.

The kingdom of God comes to its perfection in the world to come, but it has already begun on this earth in the Holy Catholic Church, which, though it is spiritual and divine, has many and important effects on human social order and on the peaceful unity of the political order. Dante understood this in terms of his day; Catholic citizens of the age of democracy must understand it in terms of their modern world.

Accordingly, whatever occasional Catholic Christians may say from campaign platforms in political tussles or from editorial chairs when partisanship or human prudence dominate their thinking, at least at Mass the will of Christ to restore the unity that was in the beginning should stir nostalgic desires in their own narrow hearts for that same unity. Whether it be at the Offertory where the solidarity of the Church is so explicitly proclaimed; or at the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* where our solidarity in the need for redemption is humbly acknowledged; or at the *Agnus Dei* where our prayers for peace, shorn of all individuality, are made collective in the true spirit of the liturgy—everything about the Mass recalls the unity that was in the beginning and that must be in the end.

See, then, how the Mass must never be a priest's mere private devotion or something which the faithful attend once a week so as to remain in the good books of the parish priest. See how it is not so much a prayer as it is a principle of divine action, a force in the shaping of life, individual and collective; an instrument, the greatest, for the achievement of what Christ came on earth to do.

*It behooves the Christian intellectual to communicate a balanced, serene perspective which sees all things in their proper relation to one another and, above all, to God, evaluating them in the light of eternity as well as of history.*

## Christian Optimism\*

THIS SEASON finds our part of the world—the part that calls itself free and that publicly professes religious faith—in a strange mood. It is a mood to which we of the New World and the younger nations are unused, a mood of defeatism and fear.

It is more strange and the more pathetic, this almost universal sense of panic, because it follows so closely on a brief period of the precisely opposite attitudes of optimism and enthusiasm which followed World War II.

It is less than a decade ago that men were talking of a "brave new world," a world of four universal freedoms (among them freedom from fear), not a world divided into

those possessed of these blessings and those deprived of them, but rather "one world," a world of nations united and peoples at peace in a reign of concord and prosperity within a global new Arcady.

Such a Pollyanna outlook, so woe-fully mistaken in the event, was born of a blend of naivete, untimely optimism and sheer weariness with the rude by-products of the age of nationalism. Its Messianic touch—sometimes it seemed to seek a Messianic Age without the Messias—was described by one astute critic in the early 1940's as "Dawnism," the ingenuous expectation that the millenium was at hand, at the very most a political conference or two away.

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\*A digest of an address given at the 1953 faculty convocation, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass.

It is easy now, with the bland wisdom of hindsight, to make fun of those who placed too sanguine credit in the political hopes kindled by "Dawnism," but at the time, even ten years ago, if there were many who did not share the general mistaken sense of well-being and whispering hope, they maintained a discreet silence which certainly no longer serves to identify them.

Moreover, if we may choose among follies, the comfortable excesses of "Dawnism" were somehow preferable, at least for the moment, to the opposite extremes to which we have more recently gone. For now naive optimism has yielded to nervous fears and "Dawnism" has melted into Defeatism, or, to keep the figure, turned into a "Twilightism" in which there hang about us, our minds, our lives and our societies, the pessimistic despair, the brooding fears and the trepidation of *Götterdämmerung*.

It is no longer necessary, I take it, to rebuke the sunny follies of the "Dawnists." They are a sad company by now, and any Jack-in-the-Pulpit lacking a better text or village Hampden intent upon election can give a hundred prompt and wondrous reasons to stoke with warmer fagots the sorry pyres of the "one world" dreamers, the visionaries and the Utopia-seekers of less than a decade ago.

What now calls for diagnosis and for cure is the contagious mood of universal discouragement spread on every side by a host of Giants of

Despair. These have turned Doubting Castle into a mighty convention headquarters for panic-stricken editors, lecturers, candidates for public office and even clergy who, disenchanted with prospects for the millennium, bid us now prepare as best we may for the approaching dissolution of every hope and help.

Much of this dispirited and fearful defeatism is perhaps a form of "battle-fatigue" in the age-old struggle of mankind to wrest some measure of order and security from the chaos about them, but much is also due to loss of perspective. People always tend to see their times out of focus and each generation is tempted to believe that nobody before has known the troubles it must endure or been so menaced by outrageous fortune as it has been.

It therefore becomes the duty of the Christian intellectual to intensify in himself and communicate to the rest of us a balanced, serene perspective which sees all things in their proper relation to one another and, above all, to God, evaluating them in the light of eternity as well as of history. Such calm detachment may be more than we usually expect from partisan politicians, though we have a right to ask it of any who aspire to be true servants of the common good or genuine statesmen. A sense of history and of eternity may not be present in pamphleteers and their radio equivalents though we may properly expect it of responsible journalists and of others who presume to shape that greatest of powers

for good or evil, which is public opinion.

But, however others may fret and frenzy, our intellectuals—professors, writers, preachers and editors—are called to maintain something of the equanimity of the saints, thus preserving us from the extremes of giddy complacency or vituperative despair to which the foolish and the uninformed are alternatively driven by the shifting fortunes of history.

This is the perennial vocation of the Christian intellectual: to resist the intemperate talk alike of the brash innovators and the nervous traditionalists; to remain spiritually confident and intellectually calm in the face of change or challenge, the threat of evil or the seduction of novelty. It is to re-capture the spirit of Gamaliel in the face of new directions and challenging changes which do not touch on the great dogmas of the faith or basic precepts of the Christian moral code, but which startle those attached (understandably but please God not excessively) to certain secondary corollaries of a social, economic or personal kind.

How sanely Gamaliel summed up the lessons which religion and reason, Christian hope and human history should teach us in times of disturbing new ideas and far-reaching changes. Faced with ideas which alarmed the traditional concepts of his contemporaries, he said in effect: "If these things be of man, they will run their course and have their end; if they be of God, you will have no power to overthrow

them and had best come to understand them, seeking to discern how much may be good in what at first jars; how much true in what seems novel, how much beautiful in what is unfamiliar, how much, in a word, is divine plan, though it seem at first to be no more than human striving."

How does the Christian university, the institution like Boston College, hold forth the promise of new Gamaliels to help us achieve the resolute calm and imperturbable equanimity sometimes so painfully absent from the reactions of even Christians to the events of our times, and always so needed in an age of great fears?

### The Lesson of History

Next after philosophy among the natural arts and sciences which impose intellectual calm and disciplined moderation of judgment, one may well place historical studies, sacred and secular. Perhaps of especial help to our generation, so fearful in its faith and so preoccupied with the power of evil, would be a new approach to hagiography, the luminous history of the saints.

This neglected field of historical studies prepares the serene Christian intellectual to keep before our eyes, so often frightened by maps which show political frontiers overrun by violence, another map, ultimately more accurate and certainly more reassuring. We might call this other map, "An Atlas of the City of God on Earth," and it might well be accompanied by "A Gazetteer of



Human History in the Light of the Saints."

These would remind us that not all places under heaven are battlefields where evil triumphs, or cities of confusion where justice is mocked and malice, treachery and violence hold their evil courts. Such an atlas and gazetteer of the saints, continually correcting our perspective, would not forget the treachery of Eden and the courtyard of Peter's betrayal, but they would feature for our times the Mount of the Transfiguration and the Garden of the Resurrection.

The moderating power of history, properly studied, its capacity to teach temperate patience and to restore balanced perspective, makes the more regrettable the decline, not to say disappearance of ancient history courses in our schools and colleges. Men are less likely to despair in the face of the physical destruction of their cities when they remember the topless towers of Ilium and yet the poetry and heroic vision that the human spirit salvaged from them. They will still resent treacherous fifth columns, but will be better able to cope with them, reasonably and resolutely, if they are spared alarm and given mature wisdom by the memory of the Trojan Horse and the recognition that the ingenuity of evil has not shown much progress in all these many centuries.

Men who have once reflected, through long evenings of study, on how titanic a task it was to found the Roman state will be reassured

rather than exasperated as they read of the intricate, painstaking trouble needed to organize a whole world in peace and prosperity. They are less likely to rail at the failures of UN and the meager progress of world courts and Leagues of Nations who remember the fortunes of the Amphictyonic Leagues twenty-five centuries ago in Greece and who have diligently traced from that day to our own the patient efforts to organize tribes, then towns, cities and states, then continents and hemispheres into something like a collaborative human community.

The terrifying impact of the daily newspapers is bound to be diminished on the mind which has learned that, just as there were many brave men before Agamemnon's time, so there were many traitors, schemers and villains before the evil individuals whose crimes cause so strident a voice and startling a style in our contemporary radio, press and platform alarmists. The typical procedures and inevitable fates of all these were spelt out faithfully and finally far away and long ago; it is the vocation of the Christian intellectual in our day to recall them to us whenever the living objects of our unhealthy fears (or, for that matter, our excessive hopes) unduly disturb our perspective.

### Counsel of Despair

What are the worries, the grounds for fear, in the hearts today of those who love the Church? We are told by certain popular lecturers and by typical spokesmen of the left that

now at last the Church is doomed, and we, losing perspective and therefore weakened in hope, almost believe them. They tell us that conditions in Europe make the final collapse of Christendom imminent and inevitable. If we have the courage left to ask for a bill of particulars, it is promptly provided in clippings from this month's newspapers and this year's liberal reviews.

Look at Italy, we are told; within the month I read the grim prophecy of a political commentator that Italy may soon prove renegade to her ancient faith by voting against Christian Democracy. He suggested that what clearly seemed to him an entirely novel and extraordinary situation would then confront the Holy See if *this* percentage of the voters, or *that* or *another* veered by *this* degree, or *that* or *another* to the left or the right.

Look at France, we are warned. Public opinion polls reveal that on ever so many issues even the Catholics are divided among themselves, and the Church, it is said, herself admits that France has become a missionary country in disturbing degree.

Think of Germany: revolutionary ideas are taking root there and new errors and evils are loose; God only knows what future faith or freedom may have in a land so vexed! Consider Britain: we hear rumors that ancient moral codes are being further relaxed; we know full well that others have been.

And Spain! What need we say of the situation there as it affords

themes for the current pretense that the Church can hardly survive a situation so precarious and, it is loudly cried, so compromised?

And so on our own shores a cry is raised which strikes terror in the hearts of the timid flock. The Church has had her day, it is asserted. She may have been pertinent in a feudal order, but she is obsolete in the age of democracy. Her power may have been tolerable or intelligible to the sacral civilization of the thirteenth century, but it is alien and not to be borne in the free atmosphere of twentieth century secularism. Challenge, then, her affectations; expose her irrelevancy; undermine her efforts and annul her influence. The time has come at last to end this dated farce.

Such things are said—they are written and widely read—in this country by Mr. Blanshard, for example. Their essential point, if not always the same spirit, is accepted by millions. They are said and written elsewhere as well: Mr. Wells' *Crux Ansata* still sells in England, and it is tame, of course, to what rolls from the anti-religious presses of the continent and the East. It presents an appalling prospect to the unsteady in faith or the unread in history.

The devout student of history, on the other hand, takes down his history books as he hears these things, and, going no further back than the nineteenth century, he finds a single paragraph from a history of the Church in the United

States which restores his sane perspective. From the chapter entitled "Growth Amid Bigotry (1850-1860)," he reads phrases which might have been written last evening to arouse the apprehension of today's faithful concerning their own worries of the 1950's.

Describing this decade a hundred years ago, Roemer tells how the self-styled "Know-Nothings" were joined in their attacks by some militant anti-Catholics who then thought they could discern the total collapse of the Catholic Church in the near future. To their way of thinking, conditions in Europe once again presaged this collapse. Then he specifies:

Italy had in part risen up against the Pope. French Catholics were not in agreement among themselves. Germany was breeding a gang of intellectual malcontents, who were endangering the Church in the home country and could be used to influence the Catholics in our country. England was vehemently protesting the restoration of the hierarchy and was causing upheavals. Spain could not drag herself out of her dynastic revolutions and was sadly influencing the Church. Consequently these Protestants thought it should not be difficult to persuade the Catholics in this country that their Church was nothing more than an aniquated "medieval" fossil for which there was no future.

Meanwhile, they judged that some prodding, with the aid of the nativists, would help hasten the end. The prodding was bitter and the results frequently violent as may be seen in the incendiary

crimes committed in my own native city, or the indignities suffered by Archbishop Bedini and the mad-cap mischief let loose in America by the visit of Louis Kossuth or the blood-curdling harangues of Alessandro Gavazzi.

But this, too, all passed—and few recall the burning of the Ursulines' convent or the beating of Father Bapst as they visit the hundreds of New England convent schools and witness the enlightened descendants of the Know-Nothings joined now in friendly action for the general good with priests whose fathers helped scrape the tar and feathers from John Bapst's bleeding flesh.

The lesson, then, that the patient Catholic intellectual learns from all this (a lesson, I repeat, which his untutored peasant cousin has intuitively understood for centuries) is not that we should be Pollyannas but that we should be Christian, men of a confidence rooted in the recognition that men and events pass, God and His work endure.

It is the lesson, too, that the tensions which plague us are not new, either in form, or in substance or in the remedies for them, and that what made our fathers strong should not find us timid. Nothing can happen in our day, or in the days to come, so calculated to appall but what the Christian scholar, glancing at his *Roman Martyrology*, or Challoner's *Memories of the Missionary Priests*, or any standard church history manual, will say with greater right than Virgil's hero:

*Maiora his passi sumus.* We've gone through tougher trials than these!

That is why we reserve the right to question the spiritual soundness as well as the intellectual acumen of those whose editorials or lectures (or, for that matter, sermons) perpetually cry havoc or proclaim the bankruptcy of hope and the early end of all. The authentic, sober yet radiant spirit of the Church is more perfectly echoed in the manifold words pronounced last month in the ruins of Cologne by Cardinal Feltin of Paris. "We believe in the future of humanity," the French Cardinal declared. "We Christians are more optimistic than all others, even though we recognize the vast errors of which human nature is capable. We are not Utopians, but we know that grace is stronger than sin."

That same spirit of Christian optimism animated the valiant Pope Pius XI (a *librarian*, by the way) when he thanked God that he lived in times of such trouble and testing that it was no longer possible for a Christian to be mediocre.

### Role of Religion

And if philosophy and history thus steady the sights and compose the soul of the Christian intellectual, what shall we not expect of religion, the faith by which the scholar is made one with the living, indestructible Church and, through the Church, with Christ, predestined for victory. The words of St. Bernard will prompt the Christian intellectual so to perfect his own

spiritual life that he may finally come to see history itself through the eyes of Christ and thus achieve, sinner though he be, some share in the majestic dignity, the spiritual liberty and unafraid poise of the Son of God.

Hence the new urgency of courses in theology for the laity, in strictly theological departments in all Christian universities that reasoned faith may reinforce the devout reason of our Christian intellectuals in preparation for their apostolate in an age of fear.

### The Christian Intellectual

The Christian intellectual does not, of course, condone evil; neither does he minimize it nor forget that it is evil. Quite the contrary; he simply robs it of that victory over himself which would be Satan's real triumph if once even evil could make the good man mad, depriving him of the spiritual equilibrium by which he is able to pass unruffled and unscathed through the scandal of the world.

An intellectual pattern such as we have tried to sketch would produce Christian champions in the great war between truth and error now being waged for the conquest of the empires of the mind, champions more given to reason than to wrath; more conspicuous for their share in the patience of God Himself than for the explosive resentments and petty irritations of men who, because they are unreasonable, are really less than men.

St. Paul asked that the Christian

Gospel be defended in season and out of season. But he admonished his disciple to rebuke, when rebuke he must, "in all patience and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2), two phrases which sum up succinctly the qualities of will and intellect which most become the Christian intellectual.

A generation of genuine Christian intellectuals, mighty in patience and powerful in doctrine, would have neither time nor taste for ill-tempered denunciations, cheap verbal victories and frenzied argument; they would prefer the persevering long-suffering work of leavening, quietly and calmly, the world's resistance to the truth; of building with confident determination and Godlike magnanimity the enduring walls of the Kingdom of God among the tribes of men.

The earth is cracking under the weight of technical institutes and scientific laboratories; men are stoop-shouldered from bending over microscopes and test-tubes, and increasingly fearful of what they find

and produce in their own laboratories. The need is of another kind now, and to it our religious universities have an unparalleled contribution to make. The word of God which inspires and ennobles is needed to counteract the divisive, crippling words of material-minded men.

So the material poverty of our universities is of minor moment if our campuses are spiritually alive, alert to the needs of the hour and robust in responding to them. We have apostolic example of what is at once the plight and yet the glorious power of religious colleges in a generation crippled with fear and paralyzed by pessimism.

"Silver and gold I have none; but what I have, I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk!" (Acts 3: 6).

This is the prophetic witness every religious campus must bear to a fearful, bewildered generation. God grant that none will fail this apostolic mission!

*In emphasizing civil liberty, civil equality, legal equality and the fact that all men are the creatures of God and entitled to equal justice before the law, we stand in danger of forgetting the many and important ways in which people are not equal.*

## Reflections

### *on the Notion of Privilege\**

**Y**OU GENTLEMEN belong to this organization because you make the so-called "First Fridays." You make the First Fridays because you are practicing a specialized, a *different* religious devotion in search of certain spiritual privileges. Now it's to this word "privilege," to the notion of "privileges," that I wish to direct your attention this noontime.

I want to talk to you about your "privileges." I want you to meditate on the word "privilege." I ask you to leave here today with an entirely refreshed, if not new, concept of the sanctity of privileges and the providential character of privilege. The word "privilege" is in a certain ill repute nowadays. This word "privilege" appears to be the object

of a systematic campaign of discrediting, not merely on the part of the underprivileged, but on the part of some to whom we normally look, because they have themselves been privileged, for the protection of the privileges of others. So I ask you to consider with me this noon, quite briefly, the notion of privilege.

You men are more privileged than you may ordinarily recall. You're privileged in the circumstances of your birth. It is a very great privilege to be born in America. In these days of pagan attitudes to birth and life and death, it's almost a privilege to be born at all! It's a privilege to be born under the special circumstances of political freedom and religious tradition which

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\*An address given to the First Friday Club of Detroit.

are the privileged characteristics of America. It's a privilege to be born in this particular generation, face to face alike with the opportunity for the alert and the challenge to the valiant which exist in a time like the present, a time of revolution and of far-reaching changes. It's a privilege to be born here and to be alive now.

Most of you are privileged in the families from which you come. Our average Catholic American comes from a frugal, hard-working family. In the main, our people do not come from the background of that poverty which degrades, nor that wealth that degenerates. Thanks to the industry of our people, and to the relatively equal opportunity of our land, our typical families tend, at the moment, to be moderately prosperous. God has lifted us out of the poverty which hampered our Catholic forefathers when they first came to America. But, by a mercy almost as great, He has given us very few Catholic millionaire families to become effete and undisciplined, a burden to themselves and a bore to the rest of the community.

You are privileged by the fact of baptism. You are privileged by the blessings of the faith. Catholicism is a privilege. Grace is strictly a privileged gift from God. You are privileged in your breeding, privileged in your schools, privileged in your opportunities.

But I must remind you that privileges carry with them or create inequalities, and inequalities based

on privilege carry with them serious responsibility. It is almost political heresy nowadays to talk about the providential character of privilege and to insist that inequalities are inevitable and very frequently good. The understandable attempt to defend and to develop democracy, the need to inspire the American people with a determination to preserve their democracy and the various efforts, particularly on the national level, taken to implement that determination to preserve our democracy, have all had one potentially unfortunate effect.

Let no one misunderstand what I am about to say. No group is more devoted to democracy and to all that it means, no group is more indebted to American democracy than the Catholic people. No people have more ardently espoused its cause. No people have contributed more to its development here in the United States than the Catholic people, and no people are presently more disposed to protect it than Catholic Americans.

But, for all that, a very real danger lurks in the loose talk and the loose thinking of the moment about the equality that is supposed to be characteristic of democracy and of democratic institutions.

In emphasizing civil liberty, civil equality, legal equality, and the fact that all men are equally the creatures of God and entitled to equal justice before the law, we stand in danger of forgetting the many and important ways in which people are *not* equal; in which they need not

be equal; in which they never will be equal, no matter how many resolutions are passed or how much political eloquence is expended on the contrary notion. Genuine democracy in any valid Christian sense and in the American tradition does not cultivate the pretense that all men are equal in every respect. Democracy calls upon us to promote equal opportunities, equal justice and a recognition of those essential equalities which flow from basic human personality. But, far from being bad democracy, it is a real service to democracy to resist the mediocrity and the degeneration of values which flow from the mistaken notion that all men are equal in every respect and that no persons are better than others.

The fact is that some persons are very much better than others. And the further fact, sometimes most important to remember, is that some people are very much worse than others. Democracy is well served when the hierarchy of moral values is scrupulously insisted upon, and when it is pointed out not merely that some are better and some are worse, but that it is extremely important to determine why some *are* better and what makes others worse.

### False Democracy

It is a false democracy; it is an evil spirit, hostile to democracy, which seeks to *level* all persons and to reduce to least common denominators all beliefs, all differences, all values. This is a phony democracy. It is a spurious spirit of democracy,

a counterfeit which pretends that all privilege is unfounded and that all inequality is unfortunate.

This phony democracy promotes the insincere pretense that all religions are equally of divine right, that all shades of human thinking are equally acceptable. It is even argued that those who refuse to discredit legitimate privilege or to abdicate divine prerogatives offend the principles of democracy. This sort of talk, so common in our day, is simple nonsense. Not all medical techniques are equally effective. Some cure, some kill, some prolong the disease. Not all preferences in art reflect equal taste or equal culture. Some are exquisite, some are grotesque, some are vulgar, some are worthless. Not all business procedures are equally well advised. Some lead to prosperity, some to bankruptcy, some to jail. Not all poetry is equally inspired. Not all forms of government equally promote public welfare. Not all religious systems echo with equal fidelity the voice of God through Jesus Christ. Some systems echo all that He said, some echo part of what He said, some echo a little of what He said, some echo none of what He said, and some contradict what He said. Not all systems of thought, political, religious, or other, have equal right before the face of truth.

There is an inevitable hierarchy of worth, of values, of achievement in a free society—in a society that functions humanely. A football team illustrates this. In the strictest sense



of the word, it is a hierarchy. It is a democracy in the sense that all men are equally accepted on the basis of their ability to deliver. But the moment the team goes on the field the differences in ability to deliver immediately become apparent. Not all have an equal say with the quarterback. Not all have an equal voice in the direction with the coach. Not all have an equal part to play. Even in democracy not all sit equally close to the fifty-yard line. Not all pay equally to get in and not all are equally satisfied with the outcome of the game.

It is important to hammer at these little "horse truths" because they are unpopular at the moment. It is unpopular preaching to insist on the inevitability and the desirability of inequalities. It cannot, however, be too often repeated in these days so hostile to legitimate privilege; to privilege based on unequal contribution to the job done; unequal willingness to work; unequal desire to achieve; unequal capacity to deliver; unequal integrity in the doing of the job. Not all persons are equally capable; not all are equally clean; not all are equally courageous; not all are equally competent; not all are equally kind, or equally trustworthy, or equally just, or equally God-fearing, or equally loyal.

A democracy is in danger when essential equalities are neglected or denied. But a democracy is no less endangered when important differences of a natural or supernatural kind are forgotten or despised.

Never forget the important ways in which all persons are equal with you. But be no less mindful of the many way in which you must resist mere equality with the mob. Be conscious and proud of your legitimate differences. Recognize and implement your obligation to be better than the people about you. It is no sin against political democracy to aspire after intellectual and spiritual aristocracy. On the contrary, the foundations of a decent democracy must be continually nourished by an aristocracy of the soul, the only aristocracy that the Gospels preach, but one which Jesus made mandatory on those who profess to follow Him.

Democracy will decay, it will ignominiously die, if you accept the lie that all privilege is illicit and that absolute equality is ideal or even possible. You cannot rest content in equality with the crowd, in grace, in attainment of truth, in mastery of virtue, in growth unto the image of God. There must always be people better than the rest in these essential respects: people who are more holy; more pure; more competent; more hopeful; more kind; more disposed to service; more espoused to duty than the general run of mankind. Unless such an aristocracy of the soul exists in every nation and at all times, then the essential equalities, in the recognition of which genuine democracy exists, will be speedily forgotten, undermined, destroyed.

There are many in the modern world who would have you believe

that as Catholics and as the beneficiaries of certain real privileges which you have *earned* you are no different from others and need be no better. That pretense is of Satan. It is totally false. I beg you not to become its victims. Give every man his due. Be genial and generous to all persons. Be tolerant of all in good faith. Exert your every energy in behalf of the human rights of all individuals and of every group. Be particularly militant in behalf of the disenfranchised, of the underprivileged. But resist the lie that these are as well off as yourself, or that they are as capable, or that they have gone as far, or that they have acquired as much, or that they are equally prepared to deliver.

Do not accept the reduction to the dead level of dignity and worth which is sought by those who resent our legitimate privileges and who despise our divinely intended differences. So live that your proud differences may be apparent to all and respected by all.

### Heirs of Twenty Centuries

It was not in order that you might be the mediocre moral equals of the spiritually starved who have scant faith, faint hope, and frigid charity—that so much was devised by Heaven and suffered on earth in your behalf. You are the heirs of twenty Catholic centuries of apostles and martyrs, confessors and saints. You are the sons of prayers and of spiritual yearnings, of divine hopes. You are born not merely of human lust; not merely

of human blood, sweat, and tears—but of grace, of supernatural plans, of spiritual yearnings.

Our children are not born by animal instinct nor even by the will of man alone. They are born not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of blood nor of the will of men. They are born of God. Christ did not become incarnate. His apostles did not preach and His saints suffer, His people did not withstand the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune through all the history of the Caesars, the Vandals, the Huns, the feudal princes, the national kings and the modern dictators in order that after all their aspirations and all their sufferings—all the things that made them *different* and *better*—you should give them the final outrage and insult by accepting mere *equality* of dogmatic faith and moral worth with the descendants of those who *exiled* them, who despised them and derided them.

Recognize your dignity and the differences which flow from it. Repudiate the blasphemous notion that it makes no difference what a man believes, or what he does, or by what road he seeks his heaven, or with whom he associates, or how he lives or whom he loves, so long as he doesn't interfere with the mere civil rights of those about him. If it makes no difference what a man believes, as pseudo-liberals tell us, then why did they make so many good boys suffer evil lest we fall victim to the beliefs of Hitler? If it makes no difference what a man believes, as the pseudo-liberals

tell us, then why did so many strong boys have to be broken lest we fall victim to the beliefs of Hirohito? If it makes no difference what a man believes, then why did so many promising young citizens have to die prematurely lest we fall victim to the beliefs of fascism? If it makes no difference what a man believes, then why are so many lovely girls and young mothers fearful as they read of the H-bomb, of perfidy in high places, of infiltration of alien beliefs into our tradition and our government? Why do they become so silent and so nervous at the newsreels? Why do the headlines so appal them, if it makes no difference what a man believes?

The fact is that it makes all the difference in the world, all the difference in time and eternity, what you believe and what you love. For the things men *do* are only the outward expression of the things they inwardly *believe*, the practical expression of their ideal *loves*.

So, while reminding you of your obligations to democracy, I make an appeal to you this noon for the development among you of a conscious, deliberate, carefully planned *spiritual aristocracy*, an elite of mind and heart and soul. You will best achieve this aristocracy by frequently recalling your *privileges*, meditating on your *differences*—their origins, their purposes, their constituent elements and then effectively recognizing the responsibilities which arise from them. Even as the correlative of right is duty, so that of privilege is responsibility.

Duties correspond to rights of others; responsibilities are attached to something in ourselves, our office, our dignity, our talent, our position.

It is out of our *privileges* that our responsibilities flow. Your privileges obligate you to the sources from whence they come, to the families that gave you birth and gave you your proud Irish and French and German and Italian and English names—your Polish, Lithuanian and other names. They obligate you to the civil society which gave you your temporal advantages, the thing that our forefathers used to call "opportunity," a word that these prophets of phony democracy are driving out of our vocabularies. They obligate you to the Church that gave you baptism, your rebirth to life everlasting. They obligate you to your Catholic institutions, your schools, your colleges, your fraternal organizations and all of those things which are the guardians of your *privileges* and the guide to your *responsibilities*.

Dare to be different in this age of socialism and collectivism and reduction to dead level. Dare to be God-like in this age of pale humanitarianism in which we are asked to go along with every Tom, Dick and Harry on the ground that he is just as good as the rest of us if he has an American passport and a birth certificate. Dare to rise above least common denominators. Be conscious of the differences which are yours because you have a soul, in this age of sensualism. And then bring them into community life.

*For more than a generation, the philosophy of excuse—the philosophy of irresponsibility—has undermined the moral, legal and individual social responsibilities upon which the stability of society must repose.*

## The Philosophy of Responsibility\*

THE TRIALS of the so-called war criminals have been subjected to thoughtful criticism by commentators, legal philosophers and historians. The opinion has been expressed that the Nuremberg "trials" may eventually cause our nation and our allies very real embarrassment because the courts which conducted them functioned without previous written law and with the doubtful competence of conquerors. Quite possibly, too, apart from these considerations, the cases of individual "war criminals" may have involved injustices or inequities because of passion or partisanship or misrepresentation.

Whatever the final verdict of history concerning the competence of

courts like that at Nuremberg or the prudence of the judicial precedent established there, there was one refreshing aspect to the determination to bring to trial the "war criminals" and to demand an accounting before some bar of justice from some of those who by deliberate plan and conscious choice brought about the appalling evil that was World War II.

This determination constituted a dramatic affirmation, before all the world and under the most solemn circumstances, of a seriously neglected truth, the truth that political, social and like moral disasters do not merely happen. They are not the blind results of inexorable fate. Even the most complex of these

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\*An address at the conferring of the 1959 Isaiah Thomas Award to Raymond P. Harold by the Advertising Club of Worcester, Mass.

calamities are not the work of irresponsible, mechanical forces alone. Just as great movements forward in the social history of mankind may be accurately attributed to the honorable actions of upright men, so the moral disasters which overtake men and nations must be attributed to the unfortunate use by responsible men of that freedom in which God created mankind from the beginning.

### A Law of Social History

In the rise and fall of societies as in the personal salvation or damnation of individual men, the old truth enunciated by the Sacred Scripture remains valid. It is a law of social history as well as a condition of individual salvation: "He shall have glory everlasting who was free to transgress, but did not; who was free to do evil things, but did not do them." This is the clue to a man's perfection: "Before man is life and death, good and evil, that which he shall choose shall be given him" (Ecclesiasticus 15:18). "Behold I set forth in your sight this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God... a curse, if you obey not." (Deuteronomy 11:26-28.) This is also the key to a nation's progress, its use of the freedom in which God made man from the beginning: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou who killest the prophets, and stonest those who are sent to thee. How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathers her young

under her wings but thou wouldst not" (Matthew 23:37).

The determination to bring to justice the so-called war criminals constitutes, I repeat, a dramatic reaffirmation of the reality of free will and of personal responsibility for the moral consequences of individual actions. I speak of a *reaffirmation* because the philosophy of responsibility had lost something of its appeal, certainly in social thinking and possibly in legal thinking, in the generation immediately preceding the war.

There had always been the temptation to shuffle off accountability for moral defect. Shakespeare described and refuted it: "This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeit of our own behavior, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence." *But* "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." (Lear and Julius Caesar.)

The philosophy of responsibility in modern times has further suffered from impersonal, collectivist theories of society and of history which found favor during and since the last century. These have tended to link human action to material forces and mass controls rather than to spiritual personality and individual

responsibility. To be sure, an earlier generation of devout and God-fearing people had recognized the challenge of some environments and the limitations of certain heredities, but they still acknowledged that the generality of men remain free to make conscious choice between moral life and death, good and evil.

But recently social theory followed new lines along which it has attempted to lead legal theory and application. As against the old philosophy of responsibility there has grown up the theory that misconduct is always abnormal, that what the law calls crime and what conscience calls sin are to be explained largely in terms of causes beyond the control of the sinner or the criminal. The philosophy of responsibility has been replaced by the philosophy of excuse.

### The Newer Concept

Under the newer concept, it is not a question of being able to transgress, but refusing to do so; it is rather a question of acting in accordance with the characters which, without our asking, we have received and which, without our choice, we follow. Character is considered a product of circumstances, and delinquency and crime are simply other names for conflict and maladjustment. Criminals are sick people, like the insane. They should be dealt with as sick people and far from seeing in their criminal actions anything for which they are responsible, we must learn to recognize in criminality the existence of

something for which society is responsible.

This has become the typical doctrine of a whole school of "psychology" and "sociology." Hence the familiar captions under pictures of young criminals: "Who is the real delinquent, this boy or society?" Hence, too, the frequent statements of sociologists and other experts who announce: "We believe in the responsibility of society, not of the individual."

This is the philosophy of excuse—the philosophy of ultimate irresponsibility. For more than a generation it has undermined the moral and legal and individual social responsibilities upon which the stability of society must repose.

The linking of misbehavior to maladjustments and to forces beyond the control of the individual offender may frequently be justified, but not so often as to warrant a general philosophy of law which loses sight of the normal facts of individual responsibility and of personal freedom. Misbehavior, whether sinful or criminal, always includes an element of maladjustment, but sometimes there are adjustments which the *individual* must make on the level of the spiritual in order to meet the test of the material and the trial of the evil.

We must ameliorate bad conditions. We must strive by social action to lighten the load where it is unjust or unsafe, but we must recognize that in all this adjustment there are adjustments expected of the individual as well. We have

rationalized too many ruthless tyrants in terms of their alleged adolescent frustrations. Too many mal-adjusted criminals have been explained in terms of the alleged conflicts and tensions in the hearts of purportedly great artists who were forced to be obscure paper-hangers in Austria or of alleged potential great leaders of social movements who were destined to become gangsters and leaders of antisocial rackets which tore American communities apart because "society never gave them a chance." Too much gangsterism and sheer criminality on the obscure levels of the underworld and on the higher levels of international action and diplomacy have been encouraged by this philosophy of excuse in the realm of conscience and on the level of courts.

The war crimes trials have caused to resound in our century some echo, at least, of that voice of responsibility which spoke centuries ago with accents divine: "This night do they require thy soul of thee." They have reminded public servants of that accountability which is imposed on every free agent: "How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer."

It is good for civilization that the philosophy of responsibility should be reaffirmed and that the philosophy of excuse should be subordinated to it, cut down to size. Civilization was not achieved by any such philosophy as that of excuse, by vagueness about account-

ability. Mankind did not emerge from recurring periods of social decline and even savagery by any such formulae. Social progress has not been accomplished by swinging along with impersonal destinies, by riding the wave of the future, by the blind operation of uncontrolled, biological, economic or social forces. It has been achieved by the vision and determination, by the self-knowledge and self-discipline of single individuals and of individuals in groups who have understood the meanings of these responsible, constructive words: "*I know. I will. I do.*"

It is easy to satirize these valiant concepts of an age perhaps more rhetorical, but also more resourceful, more self-reliant, more imbued with the philosophy of responsibility, more contemptuous of the philosophy of excuse. But the whole history of human achievement gives meaning to that rhetoric and attests to the worth of those who indulged it, who taught their children and told their fellow citizens and trained themselves to recognize that they could do evil, but must not, that they could transgress, but would not.

So we in our legislation, in our law courts, and in our social theory must recognize and make allowance for the inadequate and the unfortunate, but we must not treat their condition as the normal condition of mankind and we must not spin our moral philosophy around their deficiencies. In our sympathy we must not place emphasis on excuse

rather than on responsibility and thus spread a demoralizing social philosophy. We must make responsibility the universal norm and excuse the challenged exception. We must state the rules rather than constantly find reasons why they do not apply. We might well return to a bit of the rhetoric that glorified heroism and achievement and tone down the rhetoric lavished on those who lack the moral wherewithal by which to try or who, having it, prefer to serve themselves and blame society rather than serve society and honor themselves.

We must recognize how the philosophy of responsibility enabled boys with withered legs to become useful citizens, leaders of their community, but above all masters of themselves—while the philosophy of excuse has allowed men of real intelligence and potential parts to become the instruments of society's confusion and of their own damnation. Social stability and individual salvation still depend on the recognition of the central place of individual responsibility in whatever good may be accomplished or whatever evil must be suffered on the face of the earth over which God gave man dominion.

### **What Made America Great**

Specifically, it was the philosophy of responsibility that made America great. It is the basis of free self-government as free self-government in turn has been the basis of American greatness. Woodrow Wilson said some wise things about the re-

lationship of self-government to the kind of character produced by the philosophy of responsibility. He said: "Self-government is not a mere form of institution, to be had when desired, if only the proper pains are taken. It is a form of character. It follows on the long discipline which gives a people self-possession, self-mastery, the habit of order and common counsel, and a reverence for law which will not fail when they themselves become the makers of law."

In business there is needed, most particularly, a constant reaffirmation of the philosophy of responsibility, an acknowledgment that circumstances are never so good but what a man can do stupid and evil things, and that circumstances are never so bad but what another man can do good deeds. The philosophy of moral responsibility is the very heart of good business; the philosophy of excuse is necessarily the blight of business.

To whom, however, does a sound philosophy of responsibility hold business answerable? Not to any abstraction, like Government with a capital G, Medicine with a capital M, Science with a capital S, Prosperity with a capital P—or the other divinities of the hour. In point of fact, the philosophy of responsibility is ill-served when we invoke these abstractions and give them capital letters, as if they were Gods—abstractions such as Labor, Management, Education, Diplomacy, Medicine, Science, Business itself. The philosophy of responsibility prefers



to talk of these in terms of individual persons, persons who can rebuke me if I let them down, persons whom I please when I do the job properly.

For the philosophy of responsibility, "Labor" is not an abstract force; "Labor" is my father, going out to work at 6:30 in the morning, coming back at 5:30 at night, going to church on Sunday, enjoying a beer in the evening, voting as he pleases on election day. "Management" is not a blind force at work in social history, elusive, omnipotent, operating with occult laws; "Management" is a man, my father's boss, for example, intelligently and conscientiously entering with personal interest into the affairs of his employees' families to encourage and befriend, or absenting himself for six months of the year to bask in the sun while his business and his workers take care of themselves as best they can.

It will help break the bonds of the philosophy of excuse and restore the philosophy of responsibility if we reduce to lower case these capital letter abstractions before the presence and problems at which we cringe, and begin again to think in terms of individual persons lost in the maze of the capital letters.

"Education" isn't some sort of demiurge at work in society. "Education" is a young girl going out to her first teaching job, a priest trying to build a college, a woman giving up the best years of her life to form the hearts and minds of someone else's children.

"Diplomacy" in the age of the philosophy of excuse is another of the blind forces in the vagueness of which we take refuge. In the philosophy of responsibility, "Diplomacy" was a champagne salesman from Germany with a grudge against England, or a man to be watched with great care as, with wily calculation, he meets the press to make a point for the Soviet, or, this month, "Diplomacy" is a stubborn, dogged, admirable man with a firm, clear conscience and a rugged sense of duty—but, alas, a cancer. John Foster Dulles, mourned today by all America, is no abstraction; he was a Christian with a sense of the philosophy of responsibility, totally unprepared to back down before any "waves of the future."

So, too, "Medicine" is no abstraction. "Medicine" is a man who took special courses and developed special talents to take care of my mother or your baby; he's a man who answers the phone at night or doesn't; who stays by me as long as I need him—or quits.

"Science" is not a blind force, a capital letter abstraction. "Science" is a professor named Goddard, ridiculed as the "man in the moon" because he knew and loved too soon truths we are slowly coming to discern; "Science" is a young man in Alexandria, Va., married, with two children, preparing to don a space suit and set forth for new heights and depths of space as a new chapter opens in the story of the response of responsible men to God's

command that man subdue creation and rule over it.

"Business," finally, is not a blind law unto itself, another of these fancied historic and social forces which mesmerize the unthinking. "Business" is a storekeeper, worried about his taxes, wondering when the Salem Square project will be underway, trying to balance his books, and meet his competition.

And to whom are all these men answerable? Are they responsible to "History"? "History" is rhetoric, another abstraction. Are they responsible to "Fate" or to "Destiny"? Such words can be illusory. Are they, perhaps, responsible to "America" or to "Humanity"? These are also abstractions, the capital letter words of which the philosophy of responsibility is wary.

Businessmen, like other men living under the philosophy of responsibility, are answerable to persons like themselves—to their clients, their customers, their families, their associates, their investors, their tax collectors; they are answerable to their own consciences, and so to themselves; above all, they must answer to their God, and He is not a philosophical abstraction, but a living Person who will one day be their Judge.

We speak too much of abstract concepts as if they were unalterable forces; we too often pose as the victims of the dead hand of the Past, the grave problems of the Present, the overwhelming demands of the Future. These capital letter tyrants

must also be reduced to persons—and then we understand and face them.

What is the Past? The past is a man named Adam—and it's also a God-man named Jesus. It's a brave man named Columbus and a nuisance named Napoleon; a bold man named Isaiah Thomas, a scholar named Woodrow Wilson, a poker player named Warren Harding, a smart Yankee named Cal Coolidge, an unreliable man named Benedict Arnold, a man of integrity named Al Smith, a devoted man named Herbert Hoover; it is these and a million other men—good, bad, and indifferent—to whose accomplishments and to whose shortcomings we are the heirs.

The Present is not quite the abstract mystery we make it seem to be. Viewed from one angle it is a wily fellow named Mikoyan, a sturdy old German named Adenauer, a brave girl named Anne Frank, or some of the less attractive girls whose names turn up in the news from Las Vegas, Cap d'Antibes and Sunset Boulevard.

And the Future is no great mystery either, at least in terms of our responsibility toward it. For you and me, the future is a baby named Joey or a little girl named Jane; most of your obligations and mine can be stated in terms of what we owe them. Our moral stature, in the philosophy of responsibility, will depend on how we serve these and their counterparts for generations to come.

*We need a "vital center," where social "conservatives," anxious to preserve the heritage of the past, will have a common ground on which to meet with social "liberals," anxious to enlarge the hope of the future.*

## **"Liberals," "Conservatives" and the Common Good"**

ONE OF THE most basic questions in all social philosophy is this: Does society exist for each one of us, or does each one of us exist for society? Which, if either, of two sets of goods and interests provides the criterion of right or wrong, of morality and legality: that which the individual needs and seeks for himself, or that which the state requires and seeks for itself? Does the state, the organized society, exist for me; or do I, the individual citizen, exist for the state?

It is largely by their answers to these questions that many in our generation align themselves to the "left" or to the "right" on the social, economic and political questions which agitate our thought. Moral

and legal philosophies at the moment tend to polarize around one or the other of seemingly contrary and sometimes conflicting goods—the good of the individual and the good of the collectivity. Those who are preoccupied with the primacy of individual good tend to take their stand or find themselves accounted with the parties of the "right" in our era of state socialism. Those who opt for the collective good, and consequently give place of primacy to the rights of the state, turn up in our day in the ranks of the "left."

Unfortunately the social philosophies to the "left" and those to the "right" have polarized at their extremes, with a consequent antagonism.

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\*Reprinted with permission from the *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, 2 Dale Ave., Toronto, Ont., August, 1958.

onism, bitter in its sharpness, between those in both camps who might normally be reasonable moderates. This antagonism is reflected in the spirit of suspicion with which men approach one another who disagree, however slightly, on social legislation. It is reflected also in the intemperate name-calling by which men of "conservative" instinct or judgment increasingly find themselves dismissed as "Fascists" or "reactionaries," while those of more "liberal" impulse or vision find themselves decried as if they were all "revolutionaries" or "anarchists."

Even more disastrous is the manner in which, as a consequence, extremists on every side become the symbols and the spokesmen of the camps with which they are identified, even when they are neither typical nor worthy representatives of these camps, being more often than not unwelcome nuisances to their own side of "center."

Unfortunate, too, is the widespread sense of guilt, of "guilt by association," among sincere political "conservatives" and honest social "liberals" who find themselves isolated from equally honorable and sincere citizens in opposite political or social camps, isolated from good men to whom they are inhibited from stretching out the hand of collaboration because of the sharply polarized divisions of contemporary opinion. This paralyzing sense of guilt is intensified, to the great hurt of all concerned, by the embarrassment these same men find in the intellectual and moral com-

pany which they must keep on their own side of "center" as a result of this polarized condition of which they are themselves the victims. And so, high-minded so-called "liberals" are too often associated in popular opinion, if not always in fact, with actual or potential traitors; while great-hearted "conservatives" are frequently distressed to find themselves tarred with the same stick as bigots, misanthropes, and the hard-of-heart generally.

Hence it comes to pass, to the very great hurt of all concerned, that upright men find themselves unable to meet with one another on questions of either public or personal good, while they appear compelled to associate with evil companions almost fatally acquired in the pursuit of good—individual good in the case of the political "conservative," the collective good in the case of the social "liberal." Conscientious citizens find themselves discredited because they sought to "liberalize" where a broader, more generous mood in social legislation was clearly necessary, or to "conserve" where a more cautious or critical spirit was the manifest need of the hour.

### Finding the Formula

What to do? How to find a formula which can reconcile goods which are apparently in conflict, a formula under which we can rally to the service of Christendom all the spiritual energies and intellectual resources which are dissipated now by polarized divisions disastrous

alike to personal interest and to collective well-being.

What to do? The time-tested philosophy of Christendom, blending the hope of Hebrew prophecy, the wisdom of Greek speculation, the sanity of Roman Law and the charity of Christian Revelation, had a phrase which provides the saving word. That philosophy spoke of a third good, a good wider than that of the individual and more warm than that of the collectivity; a good with richly personal elements, yet truly public in its nature. That third good, conciliating and unifying, is more humane than the mere good of the state; it is more generous than the good of the mere individual. It is, to repeat, both personal and public, though not merely individual on the one hand nor merely political on the other. It is what the scholastic philosophers of Christendom and the founding fathers of the United States called "the common good." Perhaps it is time to seek a reaffirmation of its nature and its claims.

In an article so brief we may only suggest points for meditation on the notion of the "common good." This notion is suggested by Aristotle, who strove to set a happy balance between the general good and private good, between the obligation of the individual to yield to the honest good of the political state and the obligation of the political state in turn to serve the individual good of what he called the "contemplative," i.e., the "spiritual" person.

It is developed by St. Thomas, who emphasizes the primacy of the "common good" in the practical or political order of the life of the community, but points out how the collective good and the state itself must ultimately subserve the nature and needs of the immortal person. Both the pagan Greek and the Christian philosopher understood that there is a sense in which the good of the whole is "more divine" than the good of the individual, but they also understood how the good of the social whole must be subordinated to the good of personality. They found the middle term for the equation between the individual good and the collective good, between the spiritual good of the person and the political good of the state, in the term "the common good," a good which is not identified with any individual and yet which is not so identified with the collectivity, above all with the state, that it becomes detached from the true good of the person.

### What Is the Common Good?

What is this "common good," devotion to which may yet rally in a single co-operative effort generous "conservatives" and thoughtful "liberals"? That which constitutes the "common good" of political society, Maritain reminds us, is not only the collection of public commodities and services—roads, ports, schools, etc., which the organization of common life presupposes; it is not merely a sound fiscal condition of the state and its military power; the

body of just laws, good customs, and wise institutions which provide the nation with its structure; the heritage of its great historical remembrances, its symbols and its glories, its living traditions and cultural treasures.

The common good includes all these and something much more besides—something more profound, more concrete and more human. For it includes also, and above all, the whole sum itself of these—a sum which is quite different from a simple collection of juxtaposed units. Even in the mathematical order, as Aristotle points out, 6 is not the same as 3 plus 3. A victorious army is immeasurably more than the mere physical total of the strength or even the valor of the individuals who compose it. A symphony orchestra is made up of so many players plus the director, but its whole is much more than the mere sum of its parts.

So the "common good" includes the sum or sociological integration of all the civic conscience, political virtues and sense of right and liberty; of all the activity, material prosperity and spiritual riches; of unconsciously operative hereditary wisdom; of moral rectitude, justice, friendship, happiness, virtue and heroism in the individual lives of its members. For these things all are, in a certain measure, communicable, and so revert to each member, helping him to perfect his life and liberty as a person.

The "common good" so conceived is not only a collection of advan-

tages and utilities, it is strongly moral and ethical in its content. It includes elements of rectitude and honor, of morality and justice. Only on condition that it embrace these is the "common good" truly such, namely—the good of a people living in a community, the good of an organized human city, rather than the mere booty shared by a pack of thieves or the common hoard of a mob of gangsters.

For this reason perfidy, the scorn of treaties and of sworn oaths, political assassinations and unjust war, even though they may be useful or advantageous and in this sense practically good, actually contribute to the destruction of the true "common good," the *bonum honestum*, of which the ancients spoke.

Let the French philosopher be here again our guide. The "common good," he reminds us, is always ethically good. Included in it, as an essential element, is the maximum possible development, here and now, of persons making up the united multitude to the end of forming a people organized not by force alone but by justice. Historical conditions and the still inferior development of human society make difficult the full achievement of the ends of social life. But the end to which it tends is to procure the common good of the multitude in such a way that the individual as a person gains the greatest possible measure, compatible with the good of the whole, of real independence from the servitudes of nature. The economic guarantees of labor and

capital, political rights, the moral virtues and the culture of the mind—all these contribute through the "common good" to the realization of this individual independence.

The "common good" includes, we have seen, the cultural, the historical and the spiritual heritage which is shared by the group, as opposed to the heritage particular to any individuals within the group. It is difficult to analyze the elements of this heritage, impossible to do so in a brief article. But every now and again someone speaks out above the general din of dissident individual voices and utters ideals common to us all, words expressive of our heritage of "common good."

#### Heritage From the Past

The history of the United States affords certain clear examples of this. For example, Abraham Lincoln was a Republican; he lived in a specific period in history; he presents strongly individualistic traits; he was a partisan of the Northern cause in the War Between the States; it is difficult sometimes to appreciate that millions of sincere citizens profoundly disliked some of his ideas, deplored many of his policies, distrusted him personally. But, when he spoke at Gettysburg, he spoke for all; for all United States citizens in every epoch, every political party, every part of the country. There is no one who does not sense that the very stuff of national "common good"—all its elements, its spiritual fiber and its political pattern, are woven into the

things that Lincoln said at Gettysburg.

Woodrow Wilson was a Democrat. He, too, lived in a particular period of his country's history and at a specific phase of its emergence into the international community. He had marked individual traits many of which his friends found amiable, others which his critics found distasteful. Whole areas of his political philosophy were unacceptable to millions of his fellow citizens, and some of his policies provoked the resentment of many. Yet in his public pronouncements he frequently transcended the inevitable limitations of himself, his times and his political context. There is no one in the United States who does not feel the tug of a common chord which runs through the hearts of all when he reads the magnanimous phrasing of Wilson's declaration of war against the German Government and not the German people; or the exalted address to the Military Academy at West Point in which Wilson summarized so many elements of the "common good" of the United States and linked them, as the "common good" must always be linked, to the benign purposes of God and to the secrets of God's Providence. His words, in part, were:

... America came into existence for a particular reason. When you look about upon these beautiful hills and up this stately stream, and then let your imagination run over the whole body of this great country from which you youngsters are drawn, far and wide, you

remember that while it had aboriginal inhabitants, while there were people living here, there was no civilization which we displaced. It was as if in the Providence of God a continent had been kept unused and waiting for a peaceful people who loved liberty and the rights of men more than they loved anything else, to come and set up an unselfish commonwealth. It is a very extraordinary thing. You are so familiar with American . . . history that it does not seem strange to you, but it is a very strange history nonetheless. There is none like it in the whole annals of mankind—of men gathering out of every civilized nation in the world on an unused continent and building up a polity exactly to suit themselves, not under the domination of any ruling dynasty or of the ambitions of any royal family; doing what they pleased with their own life on a free space of land which God had made rich with every resource which was necessary for the civilization they meant to build upon it.

So the "common good" is all the heritage from the past and all the hope of the future which good men share under God. Common to many, it is therefore public; perfective of the individual, it remains somehow personal. It calls the individual out of himself to share things with the general community, but it puts the resources of the general community at the service of the things closest to the personality of the individual. That is what Cicero meant when he defined the "common good," the *res publica*, in terms of a nation's altars and hearths, of the spiritual and domestic values which center about these and which serve personality.

It was out of this concept of the "common good" that our forefathers derived their notion of the great object of the state's existence. Hence their fine old phrase "the common weal"; hence, too, the idea behind warm words like "mutual" in the texts of our basic laws.

The common good is the good which is preserved and promoted by the nurse who braves individual infection in order to serve the common good; by the scientist who forfeits individual convenience in order to increase that good; by the parent who foregoes individual advantage in order to rear future citizens to enhance that good; by the saint who renounces individual pleasure in order to sanctify the common good; by the soldier who disciplines individual preference in order to defend the common good; by the party or the régime or even the national state which abdicates particular claims or narrow prerogatives in order to conciliate those who share a common good.

It is the good which King St. Louis of France loved when he subordinated both the instincts of self and the claims of his state to a higher "common good" shared with others. Perhaps you remember the incident; one thinks of it with wistful admiration as he reads the daily news. His counselors unanimously rebuked St. Louis for excessive generosity in giving to the English King land which the French had regained from British conquest. St. Louis did not concede the English claims and he could easily have vindicated his



own by force, but still he freely yielded the land. He said: "My Lords, the land that I give him I give not because I am under obligation either to him or to his heirs, but so that there may be mutual love between my children and his. And it seems to me that I am making good use of what I give him, since it makes us join hands in common love who were before at odds."

The "common good"; it is the mutual bond of all who love the good, the true and the beautiful; who seek good things, not evil; who seek the private good of persons and the collective good of the state, but the good of both in and under and through the Supreme Good, which is God. It is the good which God gives us all in order to keep us together, as opposed to the good that He gives us each to keep to ourselves. It is the good before which, on due occasion, both individual and state are obliged to bow—the "common good."

Out of a reaffirmation of the reality and the claims of the "common good" there would come many results greatly to be desired. A quickened appreciation of the "common good" would turn the tide against the reckless setting of class against class, the irresponsible incitement of group against group. It would coordinate anew the interests and the efforts of labor plus management, tradesmen plus intellectuals, statesmen plus generals, as against the present so frequent pitting of good men against other good men in the conflicts of labor

versus management, intellectuals versus tradesmen, statesmen versus generals within the same nation and presumably seeking the same common good.

Such an appreciation of the "common good," which unites, as against—or, rather, as above—all particular or factional or partisan goods which divide, would make possible the "vital center" for which certain political philosophers are pleading; a "vital center" which can exist only when honorable moderates of "right" and "left" prefer working with each other in behalf of the "common good" to working with extremists of their own respective camps, extremists who seek only the particular good to which their side aspires. Thus the present "polarized" condition of society would be eased, and social "conservatives," anxious to preserve the heritage out of the past, would have a common ground on which to meet and to work with social "liberals" anxious to enlarge the hope of the future. The "common good" includes, in the phrase of Scripture, *nova et vetera*—the old heritage and the new hopes.

Thus, the conscientious citizen who walks a little left of center, freed from the embarrassment of constant association with senseless revolutionaries, should be able to make common cause in the quest for the common good with the no less honorable citizen who steers his course a little right of center and who is too often condemned as the friend of soulless reaction.

A clearer concept of the reality

and the rights of the "common good" may also suggest a formula for planning a better international order, an order which will conserve the values of the established nations, but be enriched by other, perhaps more basic and more humane, supranational values, as little by little we come to appreciate how much, how very much, of our heritage out of the past and our hopes for the future are shared within other nations by millions who seek the true "common good" of man.

Finally, a new emphasis on the nature of the "common good" will reorient the minds of men toward other goods, higher goods which transcend mere private advantage or even temporal common weal. The longer men meditate the nature and the notion of the "common good," the more surely will they come to understand that there is no true good so secular, so of the earth and earthly, but what it comes from God and has been hallowed by His Christ, so that, by its consecrated use, it can be a means to heaven. There is no "common good," no truly human heritage or valid hope, of any people, which lies outside God's Providence and which is not

bound up with His purposes. There is no valid good which is not somehow predestined, however natural it be in itself, to find its place in the supernatural order which God has revealed and through which all things created are finally brought back to Him.

Surely it is not too much to ask that Catholics, whatever their political preferences or occasional legitimate partisan commitments, should be among the first to understand and to seek the "common good." If an enlightened civic sense does not make them responsive to the nature and the claims of this wider good, the universal instinct of their more Catholic religious insight should make them more sensitive to certain spiritual implications of the notion of the "common good." For we may well hope that, reflecting on the nature of the "common good" and seeking always its more perfect accomplishment, minds and hearts will be lifted up afresh through the *bonum commune* to the *Summum Bonum*, the source of all good, God Himself, third and deciding Partner in all enduring agreements, marital, industrial, or international.

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*The new age of science, gazing out into God's clear space instead of back into our own murky, psychological depths, may let fresh air into modern thought. In such air it may be easier for the Spirit, moving where It will, to evoke more ready response.*

## ***Spiritual Reflections on the Space Age\****

THE "view" of the Church on science finds expression on many levels and through many channels. It is set forth authoritatively in the magisterial pronouncements of the duly constituted teachers in the Church, above all, the Holy Father. It is significant, for example, how large a proportion of the public discourses of the late Pope have been concerned with science and, directly or indirectly, with scientific issues. It is also significant, by the way, how progressive, not to say "advanced guard," so many of the Holy Father's public positions on these questions proved to be.

The "view" of the Church is re-

flected also on the broader, "grass-roots" level of popular Catholic pride in the contribution to science of the sons and daughters of the Church. These evidences of pride range from the relatively scholarly books which Catholic authors write about "great Catholic scientists," "the Popes and science" and the like, to those telling the popular stories, so dear to Catholic newspapers, of which scientists are Catholics and how edifying or otherwise attractive to believers are the lives or sayings of men like Pasteur and Carrel.

This same popular Catholic pride in scientific accomplishments reveals itself, somewhat more seriously, in

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\*The 1960 Baccalaureate Sermon, Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, Conn.

the identification of great Catholic religious orders with specific areas of scientific research. Albertus Magnus is at once a symbol and a patron of this Catholic spirit. Traditionally, the Jesuits have been noted for an interest in seismology, anthropology and certain other branches of science. The Franciscans have a heritage of interest in botany and the scientific areas pioneered by Roger Bacon. The Trappists have traditionally taken a keen interest in various branches of husbandry and the agricultural sciences generally. One of the most remarkable chapters in the stories of the modern missionary orders, particularly those of women, is that which tells of their competence in medical, public health and biological sciences.

Finally, the "view" of the Church on science is mirrored in the liturgy. The created things which form the objects of scientific interest are constantly recalled in the liturgy, all through the year, as when the liturgy speaks of those "temporal goods," "visible things of creation" or "things of this world," in the study, love and use of which the devout come to the attainment of "eternal goods."

From these three sources, and many others, the thoughtful will glean a "view" of the Church on science which is in its essence and its permanent characteristics broadly humanistic, devoutly sympathetic and, so to say, Franciscan in its spirit.

If a Catholic's reaction to the recent scientific break-throughs is in the spirit of the Church, it will, then,

be essentially enthusiastic. The enthusiasm of the Catholic in the presence of new discoveries of science will have roots of delight in the fresh stimulation and satisfaction of intellectual curiosity about the world in which we live. It will also have roots of piety and spiritual joy in the increased insight which scientific discoveries give into the omnipotence, majesty and wonder of God. The devout Catholic, like the prudent man generally, will frequently have a healthy suspicion of the claims of individual scientists, as he will have of the claims of occasional individual statesmen or artists—but he will always be enthusiastically receptive to new contacts with truth, goodness or beauty. Scientists may be woefully mistaken, as may other mortals in any field. But science is concerned with truth, as art with beauty, and Catholics cannot possibly encounter new statements of truth or expressions of beauty without enthusiasm, gratitude and reverence.

The principal areas of scientific interest in the era that seems to be opening are quite literally in the heavens. The orientation of scientific discovery at the moment is into interstellar space. Such an era of fascination with the skies, the planets and the universe almost instinctively lifts the minds and hearts of men out of the self-centered confines of the psychological and biological sciences which have so largely taken up men's attention for over a century.

We may not realize the extent to

which studies in psychiatry, experimental psychology, anthropology and even sociology—the sciences which, together with biology and other “microscope sciences,” dominated recent decades—have riveted man’s attention on himself. They have turned his gaze inward, downward and, in the case of psychiatry, even backward, and all to a point which has long since become a little morbid, a lot self-centered and altogether too materialistic.

Suddenly the orientation has shifted and the shift may prove not only healthy, but even holy. From ancient times the contemplation of the stars has led men to speculation about God. Contemplation of ourselves, particularly on a studious, scientific basis such as that which characterizes so much modern psychology and sociology, is necessarily depressing stuff and, without the grace of God, could lead to despair. That sometimes seems to be precisely what has happened.

The new age of science, using telescopes instead of microscopes, and gazing out into God’s clear space instead of back into our own murky psychological depths, may let fresh air into modern thought. In such air it may be easier for the Spirit, moving where It will, to evoke more ready response. Astronomy, the prospect of interplanetary studies and even journeys—these are far removed from the introspective broodings and negative agnosticism which were the frequent by-products of the recent sciences gone to seed. These new directions in science may

easily recapture the mood of mingled joy and reverence in which the Psalmist wrote: “I look up at those heavens of Thine, the work of Thy hands, at the moon and the stars, which Thou has set in their places; what is man that Thou shouldst remember him? What is Adam’s breed, that it should claim Thy care? Thou hast placed him only a little below the angels, crowning him with glory and honor, and bidding him rule over the works of Thy hand!”

I think this mood of mingled awe, yet joy in the face of a universe opening before us has already set in. Perhaps it will prove a natural predisposition to supernatural faith. It is a much more healthy atmosphere for religion than that which has dominated some corners, at least, of the world of science since Darwin and Freud. This mood is more likely to prove theocentric, rather than narrowly “humanistic” in any man-centered, materialistic sense. It is the mood in which a new St. Bonaventure or Scotus could talk to us of the Christocentric universe. It is the mood of a generation with its eyes on the stars, not inverted toward the depths, shallow or profound, of its own self.

There is another reason why one thinks the new scientific directions give grounds for optimism about a growth in religious fervor among the nations. These reasons are broadly moral. The older sciences of the present and the immediately preceding century—anthropology, biology, experimental psychology—had certain unfortunate social by-prod-

ucts, quite apart from and independent of their valid conclusions and great content of truth. They unintentionally fed vocabulary to the social theories of racism, blood emphasis, Nordic-supremacy nonsense and like absurdities, which so bitterly divided mankind under the "myth of the 20th century," as the Nazi pseudo-scientist called his particular theory of racial supremacy. The truths of authentic science are bonds among the nations and the valid conclusions of the recent sciences are, of course, part of the common patrimony which unites mankind. But the mood of experimental psychology, anthropology and materialistic sociology was a mood that fostered division.

Once the silly spirit of partisanship which temporarily worries about who first launched what space satellite or projectile has passed, the dynamic of the new scientific developments should be unitive. The mere presence of these objects in space, plus the prospect of exploring the depths beyond the margins of the skies, should tend to shrink the earth and subordinate its divisions. Mankind should henceforth function in a new perspective, one much more consistent with dreams of social unity among men and therefore more consistent with the moral law.

Such a social and moral climate would give the Church a chance to preach our unity as sons of Adam and as brethren of Christ with a prospect for attentive listening which she has not had since the rise of nationalism and religious division.

Some such reflections as these may have been in the mind of the late Holy Father when he apparently speculated, in concepts so thrilling to both imagination and intellect, on the possibility that the opening up of the realms of space might even bring, one way or another, partial solution to problems of an eventually overcrowded earth, problems which, in the mood of the 19th-century sciences, have so often been invoked by the dismal prophets of race suicide, the "survival of the fittest" and contraception as the justification of their gloomy ethics. The new sciences, with more radiant, broad and thrilling vision, may talk with more optimism and morality than did the bleak, inhibiting sciences of Darwin and Malthus.

True enough, no matter how vast the distances which may open to our vision and venturing, the man who travels them remains a man and could carry with him all his preoccupations, problems and limitations. Riding among the stars a man might be as morbid with self-centered brooding as he would be in a psychiatrist's 10- by 12-foot waiting room, but it seems less likely. Even soaring beyond the Pleiades, a man might still be less aware of the majesty of God than of his own weary partisan commitments and petty personal pride. Some might, but most wouldn't. At least, so we may hope—and pray, invoking Albertus Magnus to give us spiritual sophistication proportionate to our new scientific maturity.

*Historically, socially and religiously there have been the closest ties of fraternity, loyalty, interest and blood itself between the members of the labor movement in America and their religious shepherds.*

## American Labor\*

IN THE eighteenth chapter of the Book of Proverbs, we read these words: "When brother helps brother, theirs is the strength of a fortress..." I have chosen this text from Sacred Scripture for this historic Labor Day Mass because it suggests to me both the essential spirit and the reasons for the substantial progress of the labor movement in the United States. It is to thank God for that spirit and progress, as well as to beg His grace for the increase of both, that we are met before this altar in collective, humble prayer.

The spirit of the labor movement in America has been one of fraternity, of brothers helping brothers. Some workers, elsewhere in the world, have hailed one another merely as "fellow workers" or, at

the most, "comrades," and have been motivated by the revolutionary spirit of class-war hatred. But the typical members of the American labor movement have always spoken in terms of "fraternity" and "brotherhood," considering themselves to be not partisans of a revolution conceived in hatred, but part of a social evolution, a logical development from the spiritual idealism of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Revelation, as these have flourished under the institutions and traditions of American democracy.

Under such inspiration, at once religious and democratic, the American labor movement, made up in preponderant part of men and women of deep religious faith and profound civic loyalty, has demonstrated, in its spirit and its prog-

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\*A sermon at the Labor Day Mass, St. Paul's Cathedral, Pittsburgh, Pa., September 7, 1959.

ress, the truth of the Scriptural text I have read to you: "When brother helps brother, theirs is the strength of a fortress . . ." From the beginning, the typical members of the labor movement in America have been no "comrades-in-arms," inciting to class warfare; rather they have been brothers helping brothers in a loyal, positive spirit of brotherhood. And now, while labor is in bondage and workers are regimented in the lands that once talked of "revolution" and of "comrades" in the class warfare, the cause of American labor has the strength of a fortress. "When brother helps brother, theirs is the strength of a fortress . . ."

With good reason, then, do we meet to bless God, in whom and under whom we have our brotherhood. We bless Him for the progress of the past and we beg His guidance and His grace that the strength of brotherly solidarity will increase within the labor movement in the future and will be used in a spirit of fraternity toward all, at home and abroad, in the difficult and dangerous, but divinely directed years which lie ahead.

From what I have said it will be clear in what capacity and for what purpose a bishop speaks and Christian clergy work to encourage and to guide the brotherly efforts of the labor movement. The Holy Church is itself a fraternity of an even more exalted and enduring kind. The Church is the supernatural fraternity which brings together in one family those out of every tribe, nation and class of men

who claim God as their Father and Christ as their Elder Brother and Champion. The Church is a family of brethren, not a faction of partisans. The Church must always favor the forces for reconciliation, unity and fraternity; it must always resist whatever makes for antagonistic suspicion, undue division or hatred.

The law of unredeemed nature, the ultimate law of those who deny God and His Kingdom, is a law of aggressive competition, of dog eat dog, under which every man becomes as a savage beast to every other man: *Homo homini lupus*. The law of God's grace, that law which the Church strives to follow and seeks to enforce, is a law that sees in every man the image of God, the dignity of one made a little less than the angels, but crowned with honor and glory, not in isolation from the rest of mankind, but in a fraternity of which God is the author and which all men, without exception, are called by God to share.

And so priests of the Church in America unhesitatingly join in the observance of Labor Day because that spirit of fraternity which inspired and motivates the highest and best idealism of the labor movement is a spirit consistent with that wider fraternity exemplified and taught by the Church. The Church could not properly provide social aristocrats or princely classes with chaplains exclusively in their service, priests unmindful of the toiling multitudes or of the poor whom the Church must always proclaim



to be the brethren of the highly-placed and the powerful. Neither can the Church commission any of her priests as chaplains in any class warfare, priest-partisans of the proletariat in any Marxist sense which would pit them in unpriestly battle against others, for all are called, workers and managers, to be the brethren, not the adversaries, of one another.

That was one of the difficulties, no doubt, in the distressing controversy over the so-called "priest-workers" in France a few years ago. No one who knows the spiritual as well as economic plight of European labor could be unsympathetic with the sensitive priests who were moved to identify themselves with the workers, to take their stand and cast their lot with the disenfranchised and the oppressed. But, by the same token, no one who understands the nature and purpose of the priesthood could fail to see the dangers to all concerned of an alignment of priests against any of the other brethren, however unworthy those brethren. Court chaplains, fawning on the powerful and forgetful of the poor, were and would be a perversion of the priesthood wherever they might be found; but so would be proletarian chaplains in any class warfare of a labor movement conceived in a spirit of revolution and inconsistent with Christian fraternity.

Happily for both America and the Church, happily for labor and for all others in our land, the spirit of class warfare has never been the

motivation of the labor movement in our country. Quite the contrary, even in the most trying and discouraging periods of American labor's struggle for the recognition of its rights and the realization of its hopes, the basic spirit of American workers has been one of religious fraternity and patriotic loyalty, both within its own ranks and in its relations with other groups and other interests in the national and international community.

That is why a great American, a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, James Cardinal Gibbons, spoke up in bold and confident defense of the American labor movement in the days of its beginnings when suspicion against organized labor was widely fomented in intrigue which attempted to reach Rome itself and to influence a condemnation of the labor movement. The confidence in the basic soundness of American labor at its representative best which prompted Cardinal Gibbons to defend it against intrigue, when brothers first began to help brothers in social reform, remains the motive of the confidence in the workers declared by present-day leaders, typified by the American hierarchy in their collective pastorals and by prelates like Cardinal Cushing in his addresses to the C.I.O., the Massachusetts Federation of Labor and the Fourth Convention of the United Steelworkers of America. That confidence is based on the recognition that historically, socially and religiously there have been the

closest ties of fraternity, loyalty, interest and blood itself between the members of the labor movement in America and their religious shepherds, as between the workers and all other so-called "classes" in the national community.

Even the occasional tensions or disputes between labor and management in our country can no longer be represented by hostile critics of America as struggles between the exploiters and the exploited; between the "privileged" and the "disenfranchised"; between "haves" and "have-nots." Rather, they are differences between two broad groupings of equally loyal Americans, two groups which the law of the land seeks equally to protect and equally to discipline, intentionally favoring neither and, when necessary, moderating or encouraging both.

Sometimes the law restrains the one or the other, as management and industry must on occasion be restrained by anti-trust legislation to protect the American people, including management itself, against the abuses of concentrated power; sometimes the law must act to defend the American people, including the workers themselves, against any trend toward concentration of power in the hands of unrepresentative profiteers on the great and deserved prestige of American labor. But, whatever the momentary and sometimes desirable debates, controversies which are often the condition of social progress, the essential spirit of fraternity which,

within its ranks, has made American labor strong, has also disposed American labor to be generous, when treated as an equal partner, in working loyally and fraternally with management to promote the common good.

As a result, the disputes between labor and management in our country are differences between groups of equal honor and equal right, groups which make different, perhaps, but equal contributions to the national common good and which, in the final analysis, stand in equal need of one another.

Generally speaking, the ideas and programs of those favoring the cause of labor are, I suppose, what would be called "liberal" or "progressive" in the political jargon of the moment. The labor movement in America has been both "progressive" and "liberal" in a sense of these words for which, in their application to social problems, no Christian and no American need apologize. But the rank and file of American working people, the great bulk of the members of organized labor in the United States, are, as a matter of fact, "conservatives" in the sense of people eager to conserve for themselves and their children all that God has given us as the political, educational, moral and religious heritage that is America at its fairest.

True, again because of the spirit of fraternity which inspires the American labor movement and the wider religious and civil tradition of which it is a part, American la-

bor has been eager to share our heritage with the less privileged in the world-wide human community; it has sought to play its part in programs of war relief, in the promotion of international understanding and in the building of world peace. In this same spirit, American workers have been on the side of more liberal immigration laws and of postwar programs, political or religious, set up to ease the burdens of suffering mankind by translating into practice the principles of Christian charity and American democracy. In a word, when there is question of sharing our blessings with others, the rank and file of American labor have tended to favor "liberal" or generous points of view and practices.

But these same working people of America reveal themselves as characteristically and completely "conservative" whenever there is danger of sabotaging or compromising the religious and civic heritage with which God has blessed us in this land. Of this we may be certain: More capitalists than representative American labor leaders have hitherto found it convenient to play host to Communist envoys and to visiting representatives of anti-capitalist violence. If it be true that some labor leaders take part in efforts to make friends and influence people among the enemies of the American way of life, nevertheless, at the places where they will meet the Communist visitors they will doubtless find more pro-

fessors, businessmen, scientists and publicists than members of the working classes of America or representatives of the labor movement in the United States.

This "conservatism" of American workers is due to no spirit of reaction except the reaction of detestation to whatever smacks of despotism. People who have had to fight for their freedoms, as have workers, are apt to be more vigilant against threats to freedom than those who are heirs to privilege and who may sometimes be softened or made naive by the absence of saving disciplines which make workers wary of double-talk and tenacious of their religious and civil heritage. People who have had to sweat for their bread are often more aware than some others that it is not by bread alone that man lives, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Faith, then, as well as freedom, has frequently found its most passionate defenders and most ardent apostles in the typical ranks of American labor among the workers and among their children. Religion and patriotism, far from being, respectively, the opium and the illusion of American workers, have been the inspiration of their dynamic fraternity and the sources of their dominant characteristics—religion the source of the faith with which workers fill our churches, patriotism the parent of the civic loyalty with which they stand fast behind our flag and all it symbolizes.

*The doctrine of Mary as Mother of God and devotion to the Virgin under this sublime title have always been bonds between East and West. Reflections on the Blessed Mother will nourish the desire for unity among Catholic and Orthodox Christians.*

## Mary— and Christian Unity\*

PERHAPS it needed the evils of two world wars and the threat of world atheism to dispose the world-wide company of those who love God to seek the recovery of that social unity in which God created mankind from the beginning, and the achievement of that supernatural unity in one Lord and one Faith, which the New Adam died to bring to pass.

If so, then history may yet decide not only that God has drawn good out of evil, but also that the social and religious blessings of humanity united after centuries of fratricidal division far exceed in proportionate goodness all the appalling evils of

the wars and the threats of revolution which will have helped bring us to our senses.

At all events, in these recent years the yearnings of Christendom for its own reunion have been increasingly ardent. All the logic of our times has favored such yearnings, and our darkest temporal and spiritual anxieties, as well as our fairest social and religious hopes, have tended to intensify the nostalgia for human unity which more and more characterizes our generation. In the secular order there has been renewed emphasis on the supranational, universal and humanitarian elements of civilization, and this after a long era of

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\*Sermon at the third Unionistic Congress, the Abbey of St. Procopius, Lisle, Ill., July 1, 1959.

powerful nationalist, imperialist, racist and related commitments of divided mankind. On the spiritual level devout persons in every corner of the world are asking themselves how their particular religious traditions harmonize with the universal religious destiny of mankind, and thoughtful men seem disposed, as perhaps never before, to listen for the echoes of God's single, transcendent voice in the midst of the divided, discordant voices of the prophets of man-made religions.

### The Urge to Unity

Within Christendom, sensitive Protestants among the good people in the denominations which have separated from Catholic unity, but retain the Christian name and aspirations, have begun to speak less of the differences which divide them from Catholicism and among themselves, and to speak more of those ecumenical hopes which have been born of their new and divinely inspired yearnings for "world faith and order." On every side Christians with profound understanding of what it is to be a follower of Christ are seeking unity in Christ, recognizing, as eventually all must do, that the tragic divisions within the Christian flock reflect man's willfulness rather than God's will.

Meanwhile, sympathy between the devout Eastern Orthodox Churches and the faithful who have remained in communion with the successors to Peter as Vicar of Christ, is greater than it has been in centuries. Despite political persecutions which still

seek to impede such unity in faith and charity, the Uniate Catholics, wherever in the world they may be, rejoice as never before in their ties with the Holy See, and yet between them and their Orthodox brethren one notes with joy a loving understanding and fraternal forbearance which can only have come from grace and must assuredly herald greater graces yet to come.

And, now, from the Apostolic watchtower of the Holy See there comes the thrilling call of Pope John XXIII for an Ecumenical Council. Such a Council, while it may not solve all or even most of the problems in the way of Christian unity, certainly symbolizes the surest direction of all devout desires in our day, and even the most reserved reactions from outside the fold of Peter have dramatized how unity, ever the actual mark of the Church linked by Christ to Peter, has now become the ideal aspiration of all who acknowledge Christ as the universal Redeemer and Divine Teacher of mankind.

Divine piety and human prudence caution against unduly sanguine expectations concerning the measure of the unity desired by Christ which will be attained as a result of widespread ecumenical hopes in our day. There are, nonetheless, good grounds for holy, humble confidence as we now pray for the reunion of Christendom. One of these grounds, the more pertinent and impressive because it involves doctrine concerning Christ Himself, always the living cornerstone of Christian unity,

is the consoling degree to which common doctrine and devotion still make the Mother of Christ a bond of faith and charity between the Catholics and Eastern Orthodox followers of her Son.

One cannot yet speak of the privilege of Mary as the Mother of God without fear of alienating yet further many of our Protestant Christian brethren, but at a Congress which brings together Orthodox Christians with their Catholic brethren, we can and must speak of the manner in which the doctrines and cult surrounding the Blessed Mother intensify that unity among us made possible by, with and in Christ. Permit me, then, to offer as points for meditation some of the doctrines we share concerning Mary, Mariological doctrines which shed light on the nature and intimacy of the unity we have in, through and with Christ.

### **The Divine Maternity**

The doctrine of Mary as Theotokos and devotion to the Virgin under this sublime title have always been bonds between East and West. This doctrine of the divine maternity, the mystery that the Mother of Christ is the Mother of God, is veiled in wonder and eludes our human understanding. But it does so only because it is bound up with mysteries no less shrouded in the same wonder and elusive for the same reasons, above all the mystery, unmistakably true but beyond our power to tell, that Mary's son is at once true God and true man. St. Cyril's account of why Mary is prop-

erly called Theotokos summarizes the teaching East and West have steadfastly shared:

Therefore, the Word indeed was God, but He became also man; and because He was born according to the flesh, because of His humanity it is necessary that she who gave birth to Him should be the Mother of God. For if she did not give birth to God, certainly neither will He be called God, who was begotten of Her. But if the divine Scriptures called Him God, she then gave birth to God made man, because a man could not otherwise come to be except through generation from a woman. How then is not she who bore Him the Mother of God? That He is true God who was born of her, we learn from the divine Scripture.

But there is a further understanding concerning the Blessed Mother which East and West should explore together and which provides further strong grounds for our common cult and increased unity. This further understanding pertains to Mary's spiritual maternity. For as Mother of Christ, Mary is somehow also mother of mankind. If by begetting Christ and bringing Him into the world Mary became the Mother of God, so by the same maternity she became not only the mother of the Redeemer but the mother of the redeemed. Her maternity links her through Christ to God, but also through Christ to us. Here, too, the place of Mary in the total economy of salvation is given focus and the nature of the privileged relations between the devout and divinity are clarified. By grace we are the children of God, brethren

ren of Jesus. In the mystery of that grace we are assimilated to Christ in a supernatural life which gives us a supernatural relationship to Mary and gives her a relationship to us. The Mother of my Redeemer is my mother, too. St. Stanislaus Kostka loved to repeat a claim consistent with the strictest Catholic theological accuracy and comprehensible to every Orthodox mind: "The Mother of God is my mother."

Here, too, is mystery profound and ineffable, but the mystery again surrounds how these wonders came to be, not whether and what they are. When we speak of the spiritual maternity of Mary, of the Mother of Christ as the mother of all the redeemed, we speak a mystery, but we are not without insight to help us understand the mystery. These insights we pray will be studied together by Orthodox and Catholic theologians so that all who adore Christ and venerate His Mother may be brought closer to one another because of their understanding of something, at least, of what we mean by the marvelous titles that Eastern and Western Christians have not hesitated to give the Blessed Virgin, all of which derive from the central, supreme fact that she is the Mother of Christ.

Reflections on the Blessed Mother and on the unity we have with her and with one another in, through and because of Christ, will nourish the desire for unity and will link that desire to its necessary dogmatic

basis. For our human nostalgia for unity stems from the solidarity that once mankind had in Adam, while our divinely implanted desire for supernatural unity with one another and with God comes from the grace merited for us by Him through whom and in whom our reunion can alone be achieved, the New Adam who is Christ Jesus.

### The New Eve

The relation of the spiritual maternity of Mary to all these mysteries is suggested by Pope Benedict XV when he hails Mary as the New Eve, the spiritual mother of redeemed mankind as Eve was the physical mother of our race.

God grant that as we become more conscious of whose children we are, we may more joyfully recognize one another as brethren. For we are no longer merely the creatures of God, but His sons and daughters, the brothers and sisters of His Incarnate Son. "To as many as received Him He gave the power to become the sons of God, for they are not born of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!" So, we, one in Christ, are spiritually and supernaturally brethren in a family the intimacy of which the world of the senses cannot even guess. We are no longer Easterners and Westerners, save only in cherished secondary traditions, but are one people of God, thanks to the redemptive action of the New Adam and our ties in grace with the New Eve.

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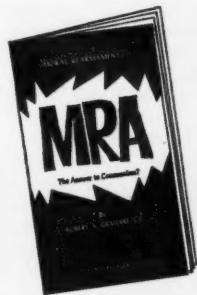
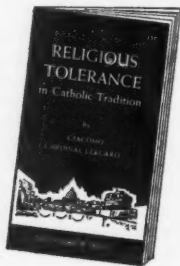
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